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Photo. H. S. MENDELSSOHN,

MISS DOROTHY MENPES

Pembroke Crescent, W.

IN THE ISLES OF SCILLY.

THE breezy Isles of Scilly present many pictures of varying beauty, and one phase of their flower life was shown in *COUNTRY LIFE* recently, when the daffodil farms and glorious colonies of Arum lilies were illustrated. As the accompanying illustrations depict, another aspect of flower gardening is considered in the present article, and we have yet to tell our readers of the wondrous bird life that haunts the wind-swept rocky coast of the many islets.

The seeker after flowers will find Treco the most interesting island, as here resides the Lord-proprietor, Mr. Smith-Dorrien, whose love for gardening is characteristic of his race. The gardens were commenced by the late Mr. Augustus Smith, and developed by the present Lord-proprietor, who, as mentioned in our previous article, has devoted a useful life to the improvement of these sea-girt isles of the blue Atlantic.

The ruined Abbey near, and quaint churchyard, are features of mournful interest, to which the tall flower-scapes of the American agave offer small relief. On every hand at Treco memorials of the dead remain to tell the sad tale of terrible wrecks along the rocky treacherous coasts. Hundreds of big wooden pegs in the sunny churchyard mark the place of burial of poor sailors thrown up by an angry sea on Treco, unknown, yet at rest in a beautiful land. The hill on which the house is built is a huge natural alpine garden, part of which is shown in one of our illustrations, this being one of the approaches to the Abbey from the gardens. It is a garden that must be visited to realise its distinctive charm. Surprises await the visitor—here, gathered together, the warmth-loving flowers from sunnier lands than ours; there, some favourite we know at home, but in happier circumstances, revealing luxuriant growth unheard of except on a southern shore.

If we say that Mr. Smith has endeavoured to form a sub-tropical garden—a garden of flowers that naturally delight in warmth and sunshine—we think we make a correct estimation of his desires. The homely flowers of the mixed border are not seen here, but aloes, dracenas, tree ferns, agaves, eucalyptus, and a thousand other tender plants brought from countries which agree in climate with the Isles of Scilly. The flora of Australia,



ALOE IN BLOOM.

New Zealand, Algeria, Mexico, South Africa, and other countries is represented, and affords keen delight to the true lover of the world of flowers. There is nothing monotonous in the gardening at Treco. A glorious avenue of palms will lead into another distinct phase of vegetation, and in this maze of tropical splendours many plants luxuriate that we have tried in vain to coax into respectable behaviour in the home counties.

The tree ferns (*Dicksonia antarctica*) are magnificent, but even at Scilly protection is needful; not, however, from the winter frosts, but winter winds, which sweep over the isles with relentless fury, wreaking vengeance on the strongest plants. The protection of reed shelters is not removed until May. On a summer day in Treco one may revel not merely in the rich luxuriance of palm, pandanus, phormium, and other tender plants, but in the cool retreats from the fierce sun, which scores the pathway with streaks of light, and recalls many scenes of tropical interest far away from the British coasts.

This garden has not been formed without considerable expenditure of time and money. The soil of Treco is, of course, naturally shallow, because upon a granite formation, and to bring the ground into condition for the plants the late Mr. Augustus Smith removed the top spit of soil from the Cromwell Castle end of the island to Treco Abbey to form the foundation for the garden. Wind, as we have previously mentioned, is a more terrible foe than frosts upon the mainland. It sweeps furiously over the gardens, and if not checked would uplift every shrub that dared to face its anger. Mr. Smith constructed, however, strong shelters to stop these salt-laden visitations, and surrounded the gardens with a strong belt of pines. The first row could only grow to a few feet in height, as this bears the brunt of the tempest, but the succeeding rows attained greater vigour, until the innermost ring grew to almost normal dimensions. Occasionally, however, even this strong barrier is unavailing against the winds, which will at times form a kind of cyclone in the air, and descend upon the unhappy



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THE ROCKERY.

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plants with unfortunate results. This is a wind the Scillonians playfully call the fifth wind, that descends straight from the clouds of heaven.

In damp places in the gardens the New Zealand *Phormium tenax* has almost naturalised itself, and the great American agave (*A. americana*) forms splendid groups, one of which we illustrate. This reveals the distinctive nature of the gardening here, and the big 12ft. stems or more of sombre colouring add picturesque-ness to the scenery. The fragrance from the *Dracæna australis* flowers floats on the wind, and entices the honey-bee to a rich harvest; and it is worth mentioning that the *Corydoline indivisa* will only live in these islands, and flowered for the first time in the April of 1895. Many tender plants are happy by the coast of Cornwall and Devonshire; but though the Scilly Isles are not far distant, the climate is more temperate, and a hundred times more suitable for a sub-tropical flora. This garden reminds one of many a fair Riviera domain, where the air is redolent with tropical fragrances and blue skies and seas make life gladsome. In it, too, we find mournful relics of the fury of the sea—ships' figure-heads, and various objects thrown upon the rocky shores. The residence contains many interesting features, amongst them a stuffed collection of native and rare stray birds, some even from the West Indies, that have sought sanctuary here, specimens of which Mr. Smith-Dorrien has shot to illustrate the birds found upon the islands. Another interesting spot is the ostrich farm, which the proprietor has established with happy results; in truth, we seem upon another continent when revelling in the delights of these isles of the Western Coast.

Tresco has many strange features. In walking over the island, a natural lake of perfectly fresh water arrests our attention, and the Piper's Hole must not be forgotten. The sea at high-water time reaches the mouth of it, but at low tide one may enter this strange subterranean passage, which, when traversed for about twenty yards, leads to a small lake of fresh water. A boat is stationed there, and one may row across with the aid of



C. J. King. MR. W. TREVELLICK UNDER FLOWERING DRACÆNAS.

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candle light; rambling on, the visitor reaches a large cave, the bottom of which is as smooth as if made level by hand. This is supposed to be connected by an underground passage with St. Mary's.

One of our illustrations represents Mr. William Trevellick sitting beneath a group of flowering dracenas in his garden at Rocky Hill, St. Mary's, and the writer knows that any keen lover of gardening among the readers of *COUNTRY LIFE* will be welcomed by this sturdy Scillonian. His garden is unlike that of Mr. Smith-Dorrien at Tresco. Of course it is less pretentious, but very charming in many ways. Bowers of radiant fuchsia bushes greet the visitor, and these lead into other avenues of luxuriant growth—*Polygonum complexum*, *Veronica*, and *Escallonia*. All is bright with colour, and through the garden floats the sweet odour of *Dracæna australis*, laden with its wealth of bee-enticing flowers. *Lilium Harrisii* attains luxuriant growth, having stems as thick as one's wrist, and we see here the flowers of English gardens—the scilla, tulip, and the plants dear to every British child.

We think a few general remarks about the islands will be welcomed by readers, and everyone who visits those which are inhabited will notice the shelters or screens to shield the daffodils and gardens from the winds. We have written of the pine shelters at Tresco, but many shrubs are used by the cottagers to break the force of the winds. Veronicas are used largely for the purpose, and these resist the winds as well as any shrub, whilst if injured they grow again with remarkable rapidity. *Escallonia macrantha* colours the scenery with its pretty crimson flower clusters, succeeded by berries, used, we believe, by the Scillonians for preserving. Its bright glossy foliage glistens in the sun and intensifies the flower colouring. Chilean gum box and *Fuchsia Riccartoni* are made to play a useful part in the defences against the merciless winds, but in the bulb fields the Scillonians put up shelters made from thin laths, which vary from 7ft. to 12ft. in height. Stone hedges are largely constructed as shelters, the stones obtained in the isles and piled, not cemented in any way. We were amused recently in reading in *St. Paul's* an account of the Isles of Scilly, in which the writer speaks of *mesembryanthemum* hedges.



C. J. King.

THE STEPS.

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Everyone with the least knowledge of the plant world knows that the mesembryanthemum is not a plant likely to form a vigorous wind screen; but the truth is that these glorious sun-flowers have established themselves in the niches and nooks, throwing over the bare stones cushions of succulent growth emblazoned with flowers as rich and resplendent as anything Nature has strewn over the earth. The common *M. edule*, with its yellow blossom, is frequent, but magenta, crimson, and other strong colours make gardens of these sunny stone walls. On some shelters the old fragrant fringed pink has made a home, garlanding the bare surfaces with glaucous growth and snow-white flowers, which bring a few pounds to the owners in the market.

Ground is highly prized in these small islands, and farmers may frequently be seen coveting a hillside two-thirds surfaced with gorse, then lumps of granite rock, which must be blasted to bring into use the required land. The broken pieces from the blastings are required to form the stone hedges. The Scilly-loving mesembryanthemum stains many a cottage wall with colour, if some brilliant geranium has not monopolised the surface, even to the roof, peeping, may be, into the bedroom window, as many a climbing rose loves to do in England. The geranium flowers appear almost throughout the year.

Wild flowers are not so plentiful in the Scilly Isles as upon the more sheltered mainland. The little sea spleenwort (*Asplenium marinum*) is happy in many a rocky home, but the salt-laden gales which sweep over the isles check luxuriant growth of any kind. Tree life is stunted, and the gorse is scarcely six inches above the ground, daring, however, to crop out of the rocks and gild them with golden colour. When heather and gorse are in flower the uplands of the islands are saturated with colour, as welcome as the deep blue of the sea lapping the shore on still summer days. Sea thrift is the "grass" of many islands. The little cushions of growth thrive near to the sea, and in the summer add another interesting feature to the scenery with their rosy flowers.

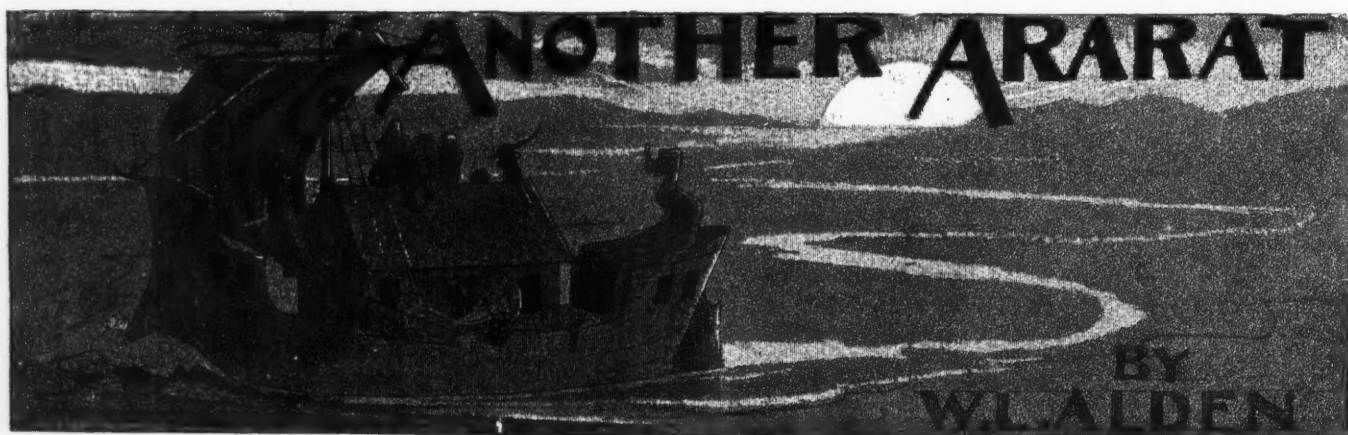
The Scilly Isles are the home of a rare family of seabirds. They cluster closely on every uninhabited isle, and fill the air with their distinctive sounds. If, when approaching the Man-of-War, so named from the likeness of the two rocks standing out from the water to an old battleship, a gun is fired, the air becomes thick with the frightened birds flocking away from their sea home, swept almost by the Atlantic waves. Ornithologists would rejoice in the bird life of these warm western isles, especially the Isle of Annet, over which the puffin has spread in countless numbers. Birds nestle on every rocky ledge, and their quaint cries create a weird uncanny feeling in those unused to these dwellers by the mighty deep. It is not our object, however, to



FLOWERING ALOES IN ST. MARY'S CHURCHYARD.

dwell upon the bird life of Scilly. The theme is too vast to be considered.

We are loth to leave the flower isles of Scilly, and, as we reach the mainland, yearn to reproduce the glorious vegetation of these happy ocean lands. But we must rest content. English gardens are beautiful too. As the train speeds on its way to the home counties the fulness of an English spring is revealed in meadow and wayside. Primrose and dog-violet dapple the banks with flowers, daffodils bend in the soft wind, tender green tints the brown branches of the woodland, and foamy flower billows mantle the orchards of the West Country. We are thankful for this resurrection of tree and flower—fresh, fair, and restful.



THE chief engineer had come up from below soon after the steamer anchored at Gibraltar, and noticing that there was no one in the smoking-room except myself, he entered and sat down to read a paper ten days old that he had brought from London. It is a peculiarity of engineers that when they are off duty they always signalise the fact by reading, with the most conscientious care, newspapers that are never by any accident less than a week old. Fresh newspapers may be brought on board, but they have no attractions for an engineer. Why this should be the result of constant association with steam-engines is a mystery, the solution of which I leave to philosophers with a genius for explaining the unknowable.

This particular engineer, while he adhered closely to most of the traditions of his profession, was not, like most engineers, a conspicuously silent man. By proper persuasion, coupled with cigars, he could at times be induced to talk, whereas the typical marine engineer rarely ventures a remark, and confines his conversation to the briefest of replies. As we two were alone in

the smoking-room, we gradually fell into conversation, and presently something was said of a distinguished African explorer, who happened to be among the passengers.

"Why people are exploring Africa, where there is nothing but niggers and fever, I can't understand," said the engineer. "Now there is Central America, a country that is chock full of deserted cities, and curious animals, and graveyards with coffins full of gold, just waiting for Christian digging up. Nobody goes and explores Central America. Why I have seen there or thereabouts things that would set an African explorer to writing a whole library full of big books if he had happened to see them. What do you suppose that African explorer that we've got with us this passage would say to finding the identical place where Noah's ark landed, and enough remains of the ark to load a three thousand ton steamer?"

"You would hardly expect to find Mount Ararat in Central America," I replied. "When last heard of that mountain was in Asia Minor, and I am inclined to believe that it is there yet."

"I'm not denying," replied my companion, "that there is a Mount Ararat in Asia, but that don't prevent there being another in America. There's a Bristol in England, but aint there a Bristol in the United States too? The only genuine Mount Ararat lies about fifty miles south-east of the river Atrato, down on the isthmus of Darien, and only two white men have seen it, and one of those is dead."

"And you are the other, of course," I exclaimed. "Tell me how you found it, and what it looks like."

The engineer laid his newspaper on his knees, and ringing the bell, ordered a cup of tea. When that soothing beverage arrived, he began his story, sipping the tea and talking in a slow monotone, as if he was keeping time to the clang of his engines.

"Along in 1879 I was chief engineer of the Staffordshire, a steamer that was in the Caribbean and South American trade. The third mate of the steamer was a curious old chap who had been master of a ship in his time, but had been unfortunate in one way or another, chiefly on account of rum, and was at the foot of the ladder again. He was a teetotaler when I knew him, and was for ever reading his Bible, and working problems out of it. He'd talk to me sometimes, when we were off duty, about the prophecies in the Bible, and try to convince me that he was the only man who really understood them. One day he says to me, 'Where do you allow that the ark landed?'

"On Mount Ararat," says I. "Everybody knows that."

"And of course you hold that Mount Ararat was somewhere in Asia?"

"Of course I do," says I. "It's put down on the charts, and lots of people have been to the top of it."

"If you'll just consider a bit," says the mate, "you'll see that Noah never landed on no such mountain. That Ararat that you're speaking of is more than seventeen thousand feet high, and is covered with perpetual snow. What sort of a place would that have been for discharging a cargo of tropical animals, not to speak of women and children? We all know that the ark landed on the top of a mountain, about the time that the flood was over and done with. Now if Noah really landed on your mountain he must have had about sixteen thousand feet of water all around him. Would he have gone ashore, and landed a valuable cargo before the flood was half over? No, sir! He would have stuck to his ark, and you couldn't have induced him to go ashore so long as he couldn't find bottom a few cables' length away from the ark with a dippy lead."

"There seems to be sense in what you say," said I. "But if Noah didn't land on Mount Ararat, where did he land?"

"He landed on Mount Ararat safe enough, but it was Mount Ararat in Central America, and not Mount Ararat in Asia. I've discovered where the real mountain is, and I hope some day to have the blessed privilege of visiting it, and finding the remains of the ark."

"How do you make out that the mountain is in America?" I asked.

"Didn't you ever hear of the Atrato River?" says he. "Now if a Spaniard was to try to say Ararat in his lingo, he'd be sure to call it Ararato, and that being too long a word for a lazy man, he'd first shorten it to Arato, and then to Atrato. Now I know there is a Mount Atrato, and just about where it is situated. That's the real and genuine Mount Ararat where Noah came ashore."

"Seems to me," said I, "that there is considerable guess-work about that traverse. It may be all right, and then again it mayn't."

"I've more to go on than what I've told you," said the mate. "I know a half-breed who has seen the mountain, and who told me all about it. The natives believe that the place is sacred, which is another proof that it is Mount Ararat, and they keep it a secret from all white men. I saved this particular half-breed's life one time when he got overboard in the harbour of Cartagena among the sharks, and there aint anything that he wouldn't do for me. He's as good as promised to take me to the mountain any time I might want to go."

"All right," said I. "Now you're getting on soundings. Your mountain can't be a very great way from Cartagena, and if we lay up there this voyage, as I expect we will, you and I will go and find Mount Ararat and the ark. We may make a salvage job of it, if we go to work in the right way."

"Well, the idea seemed to strike Jamison, which was the third mate's name, and the rest of the passage he kept talking to me about the wonderful discovery we were going to make, and how it would make us famous forever. I needn't say that I didn't take much stock in the thing, though I knew that Jamison could give odds to any regular chaplain when he was set to work out any Bible problem. However, I concluded that he and I would have a good enough picnic if we went on our exploring expedition, which would be a good deal more interesting than lying six weeks or two months in Cartagena Harbour. So when the ship was laid up, Jamison and I and the half-breed, whose name was Pedro, started in a canoe for the Atrato River, and everybody supposed that we were on a shooting trip, and would bring back

something fit to eat, which is more than you can get in a general way in Cartagena.

"We coasted along till we came to the Atrato, and then we made our way up stream for three days, and after that marched pretty near south-east for another three days, following paths that the half-breed knew, but that no white man could possibly have found. I'm not going to tell you our adventures on the way, for we didn't have any of consequence; and considering that our guide seemed to know his business, I don't suppose we were ever in any danger, except it might be from snake-bites. At the end of the third day's march we were in a region of sharp-peaked mountains with narrow valleys between them, and when we camped that night the half-breed told us that we were close to the place we were bound for. I wondered then why he refused to push on and reach the place before night; afterwards I knew what his reason was.

"The next morning, after marching a couple of hours, we found ourselves in a valley that was set all round with a wall of mountains, except just where we had entered it through a narrow gap. The valley was, as I should judge, about ten miles one way by, say, fifteen the other, and in the middle of it there was something that looked like a tremendous salt-cellar. This was the sacred mountain that we had come to see. It was about half a mile long by a quarter wide, and its sides were perpendicular rock from fifty to sixty feet high. The top of the mountain seemed, from where we stood, to be level, and it was covered with a thick growth of trees and underbush.

"We walked all round the mountain, and couldn't find a place where there seemed to be any break in the wall, or where a man could climb up or down. Its sides were nearly smooth, and it struck me that the rock was the same sort of rock that makes the Giant's Causeway, though I don't know much about such things. What seemed to me a little strange was that the half-breed insisted that we should keep as much as possible near the edge of the forest, and not in the open plain in which the mountain stood. Then, too, he kept watching the sky and the top of the mountain, as if he was expecting to see a friend or an enemy show himself somewhere up aloft. It was a middling hot day, and when we had gone clean round the mountain we sat down in the shade of the trees and had a bite of lunch and a smoke.

"I said to Jamison that there wasn't any doubt that we had found a new style of mountain, but that I couldn't see that it offered any more advantages to Noah than the other Mount Ararat offered. 'Suppose he had landed on the top of this mountain,' said I. 'How did he manage to get his elephants, and rhinoceroses, and hippopotamuses, and such down into the plain?'

"That would have been easy enough for any sailor-man," said Jamison. "He could have hove all his small animals over the side of the mountain, and they would have landed on their feet. When it came to the elephants and rhinopotamuses, what was there to hinder him from rigging up a pair of shears, and hoisting his big animals out, and lowering them away with his fish-tackle and his capstan? Or he might have made a big gangway out of his lower masts and his other spars, and let his animals walk down the gangway, as comfortable as you please. No, sir; Noah wouldn't have found any difficulty in discharging his whole menagerie and getting them down from that mountain into the plain. This isn't no seventeen thousand foot mountain, covered with mebbe twenty feet of snow."

"I can just see Noah coming into this valley," continued Jamison, "and the ark taking the ground on that identical mountain. He must have come in through that gap yonder, under easy sail, keeping his lead going, and looking for a handy place to land. The mountain must have had about fifteen feet of water over it, that being about the draught of the ark, as I calculate it. All of a sudden she runs gently aground, and there she is, hard and fast, and the water falling about a foot an hour. Noah, he gets out his quarter-boat and his hand lead, and after rowing all round the ark he finds she is on a plateau, where she lies easy, being as you know flat-bottomed, and he says to his sons, 'This is good enough for me. We'll let her lie here, seeing as we can't possible get her off without a tug, and tugs haven't been invented yet. In a week's time the water will be out of this valley, and we can go ashore and get rid of those miserable animals.'"

"For Heaven's sake look at that!" I sang out, interrupting Jamison and pointing to the mountain. A tremendous anaconda, or something in that line of snake, was hanging over the edge of the mountain, and waving himself up and down in an enquiring sort of way. There must have been fifteen or twenty feet of him in sight, and, of course, the standing part of him must have been three times as long. I had seen big snakes before, but what astonished me was that this snake was a bright blue sky colour, and I never heard of any man who had seen sky-blue snakes, except he had the horrors.

"Jamison looked at the snake and didn't seem the least bit surprised.

"There's another proof," said he, "that Noah landed here. He didn't feel justified in letting that there blue snake loose on the world, and that's where he showed good judgment. He just left his pair of blue anacondas on the top of the mountain, not feeling at liberty to kill any of his animals. What I can't understand is why he didn't leave the whole bilin' of snakes behind him. There weren't no under-writers in those days, and nobody would have said a word if he had left his snakes in the lower hold with the hatches on, so that they couldn't get out, with strict orders to his sons and their families never to let them loose again."

"The big snake had vanished by this time, and we had finished our lunch."

"Do you see that crack in the side of the mountain?" said Jamison to me. I saw it plain enough, for it ran straight up the side of the mountain, and though it was only an inch or two wide, it showed black in the bright sunlight.

"What about the crack?" said I.

"Why, there's where we're going to climb up," said Jamison. "We can cut a lot of stakes and drive them into that crack; provided, of course, it is deep enough. What's to hinder our making a ladder in that way, and going up hand over hand?"

"It'll take some time," said I, "but I suppose it can be done." So we set Pedro to work cutting stakes and piling them at the foot of the mountain, while Jamison drove them into the crack, with about a foot or fifteen inches between them. It was slow work, but before night we had a substantial ladder that brought us two-thirds of the way to the top of the mountain, and there wasn't any doubt that we could finish it before noon the next day. Accordingly long before noon we had the ladder finished, for we got to work before four o'clock in the morning, and by eleven o'clock Jamison and I were standing on the top of the sacred mountain. Pedro stayed below, as nothing could induce him to come with us. He said he would rest in the shade of the wood, and that if he blew a bo'sun's pipe that Jamison gave him, it would mean that there was danger somewhere, and that we must lay down from that mountain in double quick time. Now that we were on the top we could see that it wasn't quite flat. Across the middle of it ran a mound that was covered with trees, though I could make out the shape of it well enough.

"That's the ark," said Jamison. "She's just rotted and gone to dust where she lay, and these trees and bushes have grown over her. Look at her, and you can make out her outline without a bit of trouble. She was six hundred feet long with one hundred feet of beam. That's just about the measurement of that mound."

"There was no denying that he was right about his measurements, for we both had an eye for distances; and if a vessel of the tonnage of the ark had rotted away on the top of a quiet plateau she would have made exactly such a mound as the one we saw before us."

"There can't be anything left of her by this time," said Jamison. "She went ashore about four thousand years ago, and even a biscuit, such as they used to serve out to the men aboard the old Blackball packets, wouldn't have lasted this length of time. So there won't be any use in digging for remains of the ark, though I would be mighty glad to come across an iron belaying pin, or something of that sort. That's a curious noise over yonder. Sounds some like a horse, though it aint quite the way a horse neighs."

"Just then an animal came out of the woods where there was a little cleared space, and stood looking at us. It was about the size and general style of a horse, though it had a hump like a dromedary, and its skin was bare and shiny. But the most remarkable thing about it was a horn that projected a foot or eighteen inches from the middle of its forehead."

"Now perhaps you'll believe me," says Jamison. "That there animal is the original unicorn that no man has ever seen since Noah came ashore and left the unicorn behind him on the mountain, for reasons known only to himself."

"I owned up that this time I was of Jamison's opinion. There didn't seem to be any other way of accounting for the facts, and the more I looked at them the more they seemed to fit in with Jamison's theory. Anyhow, there was a unicorn standing right before me, and I know now that it wasn't a fabulous animal, as people always say it is, but that the recollection of it has been handed down by Noah's descendants, though no man has seen a live unicorn since the days of the ark."

"All of a sudden the unicorn gives a loud whinny, throws up his head, and rushes out of sight into the bush. Then there came a trampling of feet, and a crushing of the undergrowth, as if a whole drove of wild oxen were rushing across the plateau. Up in the trees just over our heads I caught a glimpse of something blue, and understood that the blue anaconda had been watching Jamison and me, and that something had frightened it and the rest of the animals. Then I heard Pedro's whistle, and knew that something was wrong."

"You'll have to excuse me," I said to Jamison, "but what with blue anacondas, and unicorns, and a whole menagerie of

animals that I hear but don't see, I've had enough of this mountain, and am going to quit it as fast as I can."

"Jamison didn't say anything, but he caught hold of me, and I saw that he was turning white. 'Look up there!' he said, pointing to the sky just over our heads. I looked, and then I made a bolt for the thick woods, dragging Jamison after me. What I saw was something that I had heard of time and again from the natives, but had never believed in. It was the sacred giant bird of the Central American Indians. They say it can carry off a full-grown ox as easy as a hawk carries off a chicken, and I don't doubt it any longer. The bird was near enough to be in full view. It was at least half a dozen times as big as the biggest vulture you ever saw, and it had a neck as long in proportion to its body as a swan's. I shouldn't like to guess what that bird's tonnage really was, but I give you my word it was as much bigger than a condor as a whale is bigger than a porpoise. When it flew between us and the sun, its ugly black carcass cast a shadow that spread for rods around us. There was an Englishman who saw this bird in Nicaragua, somewhere in Filibuster Walker's time, and he wrote to the papers about it, but all the scientific chaps said he was a first-class liar."

"The bird didn't seem to notice us, but after circling round the mountain a couple of times it sailed away to the southward, and was out of sight in a few minutes."

"Come along," said I to Jamison, "before we see a lot more of delirious animals. I've seen enough to keep me sober for the rest of my days. Pedro is whistling like mad, and perhaps he needs us."

"By this time Jamison had pulled himself together again, and came with me willingly enough. We climbed down our ladder, and crossed the valley to where we had left Pedro in the shade. We found him packing up our traps, and making ready to leave."

"We must go at once," he said. "The bird has seen us and will be sure to return. Few men see him and live. Come away, my masters, for the love of the Virgin."

"Both Jamison and I were willing to leave. We had seen a great deal more than we had bargained for, and though I didn't much believe in what Pedro said about the bird, I was convinced that my state-room aboard the steamer was good enough for me, and that nobody would catch me tramping through the Central American forest a second time. We started as soon as the day began to get a little cooler, and got back to the Atrato and our canoe without any accident. There is no doubt, however, that we were followed by the bird. Three times in the course of the tramp Pedro, who never ceased to watch the sky, pulled us aside from the trail into the thick bush, and as we lay there, watching the rifts between the branches, we saw something sailing along so high above us that it was little more than a black speck. We saw no more of it when we were once afloat, and Pedro said that it never flew over water. Anyhow he believed that it never did, for he knocked off saying the prayers that he had kept at pretty steady all the time he was in the woods, and he looked forward to Cartagena rum with more thirst than I ever knew a man to show."

"That's why I believe that Noah's ark landed in Central America, and not in Asia. What I have told you is the cold truth, though I know that you will say that any man who is willing to drink rum enough could see the same things without the trouble of leaving his bunk aboard ship, or his bedroom ashore. But if you'll go to Central America, you'll see that mountain, and a heap more of curious things, and that African explorer in the saloon will just die of mortification when he comes to read your books, and reflects that he has been wasting his time in such a common-place continent as Africa."

Kennel Notes.



A VISIT of our photographer to Kingsbury a few weeks back gave him the opportunity of taking the photograph of A STRING OF SAPLINGS being exercised in the neighbourhood by Frank Hall, one of the most popular trainers in the South of England. Some time previously the writer spent a profitable morning at Hall's kennels, and had every animal in the large team brought out for inspection. The Waterloo candidates, Kilmoor and High Dapple Moor, were among the number, and at that time their prospects certainly appeared to be bright; so forward, indeed, were both animals, that it was almost worth risking a trifle at long odds that one or the other

would be the means of the Middlesex trainer realising his ambition. Need it be stated what that is? At Altcar, in February, Hall was once more doomed to disappointment, and he now hopes that another Texture may be found in the saplings he has in hand. Texture, who won for Count Streganoff in 1894, was, until a fortnight before the great event—when she changed hands—in Hall's kennel.

Only those who have had charge of a string of saplings can form but the faintest idea of the vast responsibility resting on the shoulders of the trainer. No bigger lottery exists than the bringing up of greyhound puppies, and it very often occurs that the best of the litter is given away or sold for the proverbial mere song. It is on record indeed that Brigadier, one of the staunchest greyhounds that ever ran at Altcar, was bought for 30s. before he won the Waterloo Cup, whilst only quite recently the late Mr. Hamar Bass, M.P., gave 270 guineas for White Hawk, thought to be good enough to stand a big chance at Altcar. He was a failure, as have been hundreds of high-priced greyhounds before him. He, too, was a tried dog. How difficult it must therefore be to ascertain the merits of saplings. As a matter of fact, the all-important question as to how good or how bad a puppy may be cannot be determined until he has been tried with others. Mr. Fyson, a Newmarket trainer of half a century ago, had a rule to which he always adhered in selecting his puppies, and at any rate it was a very practical one. The door of the building in which they were kept after leaving



T. Fall,

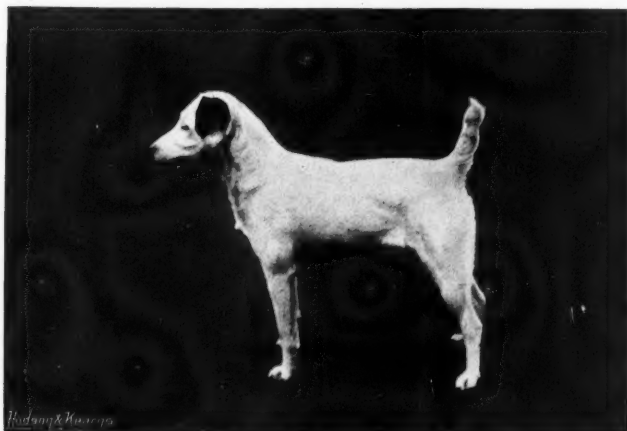
A STRING OF SAPLINGS.

Faber Street.

their dam opened in two parts, the lower half of it being always closed. Before they were let out for exercise in the morning, someone on the outside encouraged them to leap over by calling and whistling to them, and the first one that surmounted the obstacle was invariably kept, on the ground that it displayed more courage, cleverness, and strength of back than the rest. I know not whether Hall has applied such a test to the saplings herewith illustrated. There does not, however, appear to be a weak one amongst them.

Another pretty picture of puppies is the one of that good Collie, BEESWAX AND LITTER. What a merry little lot they appear to be. Life is before them, and as yet they know not the troubles and the trials of the show bench. Their dam, as good a mother as could be, is evidently proud of her offspring; and, although she is to all appearances intent on giving nourishment to the puppies so lovingly nestling close to her, she has an eye to the forward youngster, who, startled by the appearance of the camera, is on discovery bent. He will, no doubt, be heard of again, for, like the curious child or the inquisitive chicken, the puppy possessing a fancy to stray from the others and to strike out a line for himself is, if intended for public life, certain to hold his own.

One of our most successful breeders has a method of selecting a puppy somewhat similar to the one adopted by the greyhound dealer mentioned in a preceding paragraph. It is, however, a much simpler way of determining which of the litter are worth retention; and, as many readers of COUNTRY LIFE may some day be anxious to make a selection, a very difficult matter by the way, no harm can be done by giving publicity to the little ruse. It is not the antiquated one of holding up a puppy by the tail, and thus judging his gameness by noticing how he acts; this can be no test. Pick up the youngster, however, the earlier in life the better; make a noise, and take particular notice of the way he acts. If he appears at all intelligent and seems to note the sound, either by movement of his little ears or by looking at his tormentor, he is worth keeping back for further trial. A sluggish, morose, or stupid puppy is not the one likely to make a good dog. Points cannot, of course, be determined until much later in life, although it is a fact that the most sensational Collie ever known, Champion Southport Perfection—now owned by Mr. A. H. Megson, of Manchester—was chosen from a litter by Mr. W. E. Mason, another Lancashire breeder. On seeing the puppy with its dam he declared it to be the best Collie ever bred, and offered the owner £400 for it. The offer was accepted, and Mr. Mason jested at by all the leading breeders of the day. The puppy, however, fulfilled all his early promise, earned his cute



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DAME FORTUNE.

"C.L."



W. H. Pugh,

BEESWAX AND LITTER.

Copyright

purchaser over £2,500, and was then sold for 1,000 guineas. This reads like a romance, but Mr. Mason's stud register shows that for a considerable portion of his career Southport Perfection was earning money at the rate of £20 to £30 a week.

No greater contrast, in almost every particular, than that between the two Fox-terriers, Parson Jack and Dame Fortune, could be imagined. They appear to be quite different varieties. True, one is a wire-haired dog and the other a smooth bitch; one a workaday Terrier and the other a bench Vere de Vere, for of all the Fox-terriers one sees at the leading shows none come up to the ideal so nearly as does DAME FORTUNE. She is really a lovely Terrier, and if pressed at all as regards show points, Donna Fortuna, her daughter, is the only Fox-terrier of the same sex capable of doing this. Seen together, mother and daughter are wonderfully alike, and although the younger canine has been adjudged the better of the pair whenever they have met, Mr. Redmond, who of all men ought to be able to express an opinion, always declared that condition told the tale. After the show of the Fox-terrier Club at Brighton last November Mr. W. Paterson, a Glasgow admirer of the variety, induced Mr. Redmond to part with Dame Fortune in exchange for a cheque for £300. Since then she has not been seen much in England, although at Lytham—where, by the way, a "snap" at her whilst she was being shown was taken by a gentleman amateur—she did exceedingly well. Maternal cares have pulled her down, but even now she is not far from the very front flight, whilst as the dam of Donna Fortuna, described as "almost perfect, and perhaps the best smooth Fox-terrier we have ever had," she will ever be remembered by breeders of the present decade as one of the most illustrious of Mr. Redmond's famous strain of show Terriers.

Mr. H. P. East of Kingsbury, a gentleman who is well known as a follower of the Devon and Somerset Staghoues, is the owner of the "hard bitten, varmint little Terrier" rejoicing in the name of PARSON JACK. He is Devonshire bred, and, it is almost unnecessary to say, has a taint of the famous strain bred by the Rev. Jack Russell. His owner is a very ardent sportsman, and although not caring for the show type of Terrier, is a staunch believer in good blood. That this is possessed by his dog is proved by his pedigree. Sambo, a dog owned by Mr. Potter of Bolham, was his sire, Mr. Hackshaw's Maud being his dam. The Old Jester blood, the very best in the country, for it



A. Fall,

PARSON JACK.

Baker Street.

is believed not to contain any smooth-coated taint, is here very pronounced; whilst Carlisle Tyro, a phenomenally successful dog ten years ago and certainly one of the progenitors of the present-day rough-coated Terriers, was another of similar derivation. Tyro created a great sensation when he first appeared at the show of the Kennel Club, held in those days at the Alexandra Palace. Mr. Rawdon Lee relates how the Carlisle celebrity won all along the line, commencing with the puppy class, and ending with the produce stake. He also captured the 50-guinea challenge cup and the sum of £25 in hard cash offered for the best Fox-terrier—wire or smooth—bench at the show. In all he won close on £100—a big amount for a puppy to win in a day. Parson Jack is thus quite an aristocrat, although his owner prefers to keep him for work. He has, by the way, a most kind and loving disposition, is a good water dog, and dead game on all kinds of vermin above or below ground.

Several requests for information as to the characteristics of the Manchester or black and tan Terrier have been made by readers of COUNTRY LIFE, hence the inclusion in this article of a photograph of CHAMPION STARKIE BEN, Lieutenant-Colonel Dean's very typical Terrier. At Birmingham he scored his sixth championship—clear proof of his quality, for competition has during the last few years been exceptionally keen. His great points are the possession of a wonderfully long and powerful head, grand neck, short back, sound colour, and a tail well set on, and short, straight, and fine. All these points are exceedingly well brought out in Mr. Pugh's photograph. A great drawback to the variety is its weak constitution, and few breeders have had so disastrous an experience in this respect as Lieutenant-Colonel Dean.

Even with one of the best appointed kennels in the country, situate in a healthy part of Cheshire, the mortality has been most discouraging, and less ardent fanciers than the master of Craiglands would have long ago given up the game in despair. It has been, however, the aim of this good supporter of the variety to secure a thoroughly representative team, and in this his perseverance has been rewarded, for there is not in the world so fine a collection of "the attractively coloured or symmetrically shaped dogs" known as black and tans as is now sheltered at Craiglands, Bromborough. BIRKDALE.



W. H. Pugh.

STARKIE BEN.

Copyright

THE GOLDEN VALLEY.

THE Golden Valley in Herefordshire, although easily accessible by rail and with a local line running through the midst of it and connecting it with Pontrilas on the Great Western, and Hay on the Hereford, Hay, and Brecon branch of the Midland Railway, is but little known to tourists, and hence perhaps its greatest charm. Still less known and even more beautiful is the country which slopes up from it on the west, that wild tract of mountainous land between Herefordshire and Brecon—a land as yet almost unexplored, and so remote and inaccessible that it is a very Paradise for those "who love to set their faces, alone and unattended, towards the wilderness."

Perhaps the chief interest, architecturally and archæologically, is that stately and pathetic building which once formed the choir of a Cistercian abbey and is now the parish church of Abbey Dore. It was restored, saved indeed from utter destruction, in the seventeenth century by Lord Scudamore of Holme Lacy, whose name deserves to live if only because to him the country owes the preservation of this uniquely beautiful building

and the erection too of that rood-screen which is, in its own way, as beautiful a thing as the far older church which it decorates. "The large neglect, the noble unsightliness of it; the record of its years written so visibly, yet without sign of weakness or decay . . . not as ruins are, feebly or fondly garrulous of better days; but useful still, going through its appointed work . . . so it stands with no complaint about its past youth . . . gathering human souls together underneath it, the sound of its bells for prayer still rolling through its rents. . . . I cannot tell half the strange pleasures and thoughts that come about me at the sight of that old tower. . . ." These words of Ruskin on a far distant church, a far distant scene, were in my thoughts as I looked at Abbey Dore after a pilgrimage to it through budding April lanes.

But Dore is by no means the only interesting building in the valley. There is Vow Church, with its curious internal wooden framework and its rough Jacobean oak screen; and near it is a beautiful half-timbered house which has the reputation of

having been once the "poor house" of the parish. Peter Church, too, is almost unique with its triple chancels; and although Dorston has been rebuilt, it has a story connected with it which gives it an interest too. There was, we are told, a Saxon church here as late as 1827; but in those days there lived an archdeacon, and that archdeacon counselled the demolition of the Saxon church and the erection of the present building. Attached to the old church was a more modern chapel, and when this was pulled down a wonder came to light in the shape of a stone bearing the inscription "Hanc capellam ex voto ad Mariam Virginem Richardus de Brito dedicavit." It is a tradition, which this seems to confirm, that the murderers of Thomas à Becket, of whom Richard Brito was the least guilty, passed the remainder of their lives after the murder as hermits in the neighbouring Black Mountains.

Besides churches there is another fast vanishing minor antiquity in which this valley is singularly rich. I mean those old barns of wattled oak laths on a stone or brick foundation, a form of building which is, I believe, of almost prehistoric type. And on the summit of one little hill is a ruined castle which gives another interest to the scenery, that "pensiveness indescribable" which comes to some of us in any spot where, as Professor Shairp says, men have lived and died, have joyed and sorrowed and disappeared, leaving no history perhaps, but only crumbling walls and pathetic remembrances, behind them.

Nor must we forget how around the valley hang traditions of "the Wars," as they are still called here, between King and Parliament. Few counties were more systematically plundered than Herefordshire, and the nearness of the Golden Valley to Hereford, which was so often besieged, its remoteness and defencelessness, made it a favourite forage ground. Horses seem to have been a frequent object of plunder, but bread was also eagerly sought for, and the soldiers had an unpleasant habit of taking dough or unbaked bread out of the ovens and throwing it away that no one else might profit by what they had unwillingly to leave. In Mr. Webb's history of the Civil War in Herefordshire and the adjacent counties there are many anecdotes relating to the valley, and most of them relate to the Scotch troops of the Parliamentary army, that "Scotch mist" which Charles's spirited march on Hereford dispersed. At a hamlet called the Bage, in the parish of Dorston, in a deep, narrow wooded dingle, the bed of a stream that rises in Cusop Hill—in such a beautiful spot as this there is a tradition that the country people set their dogs upon a Scot who had strayed from his



Poulton and Son.

THE SCREEN, ABBEY DORE CHURCH.

Copyright

troop, and that he was there torn to pieces by them. The place is still known as Scotland Brook. At Monnington, in the same parish, the old people used to tell with pride of how the grandfather of one of them killed a Scotch trooper, as he rode by, with a blow from his tall hedgebill—a relic, by the way, of those brown bills which did such service at Crecy and Poitiers.

And the King himself once journeyed through the valley. It was in September, 1645, that a rendezvous of his little army was appointed at Arthur's stone, a still remarkable cromlech in the parish of Dorston, and from which there is one of the most characteristic of the many beautiful views which these hills afford. The Black Mountains, the Malvern Hills, Hereford's sturdy tower rising above the city's smoke cloud, nearer hills and woods, the wandering river—all this could have brought but little joy to the sad heart of Charles, who must have seen too clearly that the day was slowly creeping on when his already victorious enemies would tread his life down upon the earth, and lay his honour in the dust.

From the Golden Valley there is a gradual ascent westward towards the great tract of country known as the Black Mountains, very beautiful and very inaccessible. To compress a quarter of what might be said of it into one short paper would be impossible, but what strikes a stranger first is the uniqueness of the form of those mountains. Although they really cover what may roughly be called a square of country, they have the appearance of a long narrow line of hills, such as that of the Malvern Hills, ending on the south in the beautiful peak of the Scyvirid Vawr, the holy mountain, which seems bathed in perpetual light, and on the north with the ridge of the Black Hill. In one of the valleys, almost in the centre of the square, is the ruined Benedictine Abbey of Llanthony, of which Camden wrote that

"the cloisterers sitting here in their cloisters, when to refresh themselves they chance to looke up, they see on everie side of them, over the high roofes and ridges of their houses, the tops of the hills touching as it were the skie, and the very wild deere for the most part, whereof there is heere great store, feeding aloft (as one would say) in the farthest horizon or kenning of their sight. And it is between one and three of the cloke, or thereabouts, in a faire clear daie, ere they can see here the bodie of the sunne, so much ado hath hee to get above the hill tops by that time." Alas, no deer are now to be scanned by the traveller, but there are many birds on these wild hills which are strange to the dwellers in more cultivated



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AN OLD WATTLED BARN.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

places. In the sheltered valleys blackcock are indigenous; grouse abound all over the mountain in March, curlews come to it; in April, the ring-ousel is piping there; even golden plovers and stone curlews are occasionally seen and heard; and the mysterious and charming little wate-rousel is common along the streams which run among these hills all the year

through. Very beautiful, too, are some of the half timbered houses of the district which fringes this wild, deserted mountain world. And even the plain stone buildings are interesting from their antique doors and fittings, and from the wealth of old oak and old household treasures which they still contain.

THE TRIUMPH OF MERTON.



er. W. Taunt.

PEMBROKE PRESSED BY CHRISTCHURCH.

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IT is with no small gratification that I find myself called upon to append a few words to a picture of the Merton College boat, made at the moment of supreme triumph during the Summer Eights, which is preceded by one representing Pembroke sorely pressed by Christ Church. The Merton picture, it will be observed, is somewhat dark in tone; but I would not have it otherwise, for although I was miles away from happy Oxford when the final scene was enacted, a witness of many like scenes, Consule Planco know that it is true to life. Consule Planco, by the way, means roughly: "When Liddell was the stately Dean of Christ Church, and when Knox of Merton was Proctor, and fined the luckless undergraduate who dared to pause, capless and gownless, to tie up his shoelace outside Canterbury gate." The sun, carefully controlled by the artist's hand and skill, draws—or is it "paints"—the picture; and the sun of a May evening, when the first division of the Eights have rowed from the starting point to the barges, is a dying monarch. A bright, clear picture would have been untrue to facts, whereas this

picture of the victors, of the strong and lusty rowers who made seven bumps in six nights, shows them exactly as their boat lay alongside their barge, when the evening shadows fell and the wild excitement of the racing yielded to the peaceful influence of falling night.

There is no college in Oxford more pleasant than Merton, which lies under the shadow of Christ Church, and in close proximity to Oriel. If memory serves me correctly its members used to be called, and certainly deserved to be called, Merton gentlemen. Sportsmen and scholars, refined in manner and generous in hospitality, good friends and good fellows all, they were universal favourites. To adapt an American couplet:—

"What e'er they set their hands unto
They done their level best."

But on the river they had their "ups" and "downs," and I remember both. "Myself when young did eagerly frequent," not "master and saint," but the barges during the Eights. It fell upon a time that the spirit failed me, and I would not run up with the straining crews from Iffley and past the Gut to the point

opposite the 'Varsity barge. But when the shouting and bell-ringing and horn-blowing had ended from sheer exhaustion, I hailed a Merton friend across the river, asking how it had fared with his college boat, and he roared back in sorrow and in anger, "We have been bumped by that blank Brickyard." He meant Keble, raised to the memory of a modern saint, a college in which many a sterling good companion lived in tiny rooms, which was then staring, new, and raw to view. Those were days of "downs;" but soon came a prosperous year. Of the crew which did wonders and sent the name of Merton hurtling up the list, the pet name of one only survives in my memory. We called him Tithonus, "Titho" for short; he rowed hard, he read hard, and got his first; and now he is passing rich, in the Chau-



H. W. Taunt.

MERTON'S TRIUMPHAL RETURN.

Copyright

cerian sense, somewhere on the Welsh bank of the Severn. A glorious bump-supper followed then, a glorious bump-supper will no doubt follow now. May all those who attend it claim, as I can claim, about a score of years after the first, to have entered into the spirit of it thoroughly, and to remember it. To remember a bump-supper at all is far from easy; to remember it in detail is supremely difficult; it is the proudest boast of my life that I can not only remember the details, but a whole speech verbatim. Ah me! how we feasted on salmon and cucumber, and lobster, and other things which would spell instant death now! How the wine-cup circulated in many kinds, and how we mixed them all with well-grounded confidence in the recuperative powers of strong young bodies and strong young heads! How we smoked the good cigars of Oxford which had really no merit except that of expense, and we thought them good! One used to sniff at them, and see if they crackled when turned between finger and thumb, and look knowing, I remember. But we were all happy, even merry, which was the main thing. And we listened to wheezy Slappoffski, commonly called "Slap," as, his afflicting band silent for a moment, he croaked out in jocose German Latin—

"Edite, bibite, collegiani:
Post multa secula pocula nulla."

It was not quite true. There are cups still, and the wine in them is a hundred times better in reality. But it does not taste half so divine as the creaming gooseberry of Oxford which flowed down lusty young throats, and the old feeling of innocent exhilaration is lost in dyspeptic apprehension. Then there was another song—I fancy the singer is now immersed in affairs of State—with a chorus—

"Troll, troll, the merry brown bowl,
Nectar of heaven is that draught divine;"

and the roof of the hall rang again and again to the hearty melody. Finally, somebody proposed the toast of the evening, New College being honoured as chief among those who had been bumped. With laughing and with chaffing we settled down to listen to oratory, and the New College skipper—cart ropes would not drag his name out of me—rose upon uncertain legs from his seat high on the left of the hall, and stood upon wobbling feet amidst great cheering. His words were these: "Gentlemen, Merton may be a blank fine college; all I can say is, New College is a blank finer." Then he collapsed, and well he might, for he had made the finest after-dinner speech ever delivered by mortal. I am proud to remember it, proud, indeed, to remember anything of that Homeric revel. May the Merton bump-supper of to-day flourish equally. POCULA NULLA.



RATHER more than a week ago the subject of this brief memoir was buried within the precincts of Oriel College, and before long, no doubt his tomb will bear an appropriate inscription. As it was "the air was heavy with the scent of flowers" when the remains of this dog, full of years and honour, were committed to the earth, and one of the numerous wreaths bore the legend: "From his sorrowing friends at 15, Oriel Street." Those unhappy persons who have not known Oxford during recent years may deem in the nature of a travesty that a mere dog should be followed to the grave with so much ceremony; to those who have known Oxford for a few years past it will seem the most natural thing in the world, for "Bill" was as well-known and probably quite as well-beloved as the Vice-Chancellor, and a great deal more popular than the Proctors and their human bulldogs. To all dons and undergraduates of Oxford, to all scouts and scout's boys, to all cabmen and railway-porters, to all hotel-keepers and the like, to all dog-lovers of the



PLOUGHED.

University or of the City, we offer our humble apologies for telling them, in all probability, less than they know already. To dog-haters we have nothing to say since to us they are persons not to be understood, creatures but half human, crossgrained mysteries of creation. Strangers, however, may like to read a few notes from the biography of a famous bulldog. Payn's elegy concerning "Our dog Jock" fits the character of "Oriel Bill" passing well. He was indeed

"A rollicksome, frolicsome, rare old cock,
As ever did nothing."



THE GOAL-KEEPER.

He was also "As slow at a fight, as swift at a feast." There are hundreds of men, gentle and simple, who will be disposed to join in the lament—

"Never more now shall our knees be pressed,
By his dear old chops in their slobbery rest,
Nor our mirth be stirred at his solemn looks,
As wise and as dull as divinity books."

Those quaint lines might have been inspired by the sullen, bleary-eyed face, and the dejected jowl which stand above the title *PLOUGHED* in that picture which, with others, the work of accomplished Mr. Soame, of Oxford, adorns our pages. The others show Bill in paternal attitude, and prepared to join in the athletic pursuits of the college of which he was an attached if irregular member. Bill, it will be observed, was a bit of a humbug. Association football he understood; no Cobbold or Burnup would ever have put the ball into the net when thus guarded by *THE GOALKEEPER*; but when it came to the Rugby game he affected more knowledge than he possessed. *THE KICK OFF* not only shows him wearing a distinctly "Socker" cap, but he has placed the ball all wrong, and, in more senses than one, his efforts are clearly bound to be bootless.



THE KICK OFF.

Years ago there was a clever picture in the *London Charivari* not of "Bill"—although he has been the subject of the kindly pen of Mr. Punch—but of some charming children discussing the question of property in a nursery donkey. "He's my donkey"; "no he's my"; said two infant disputants, and the third, the blessed peacemaker, murmured "no, he's all of our donkey." That is what Oxford said about "Bill." Children, servants, cabmen, undergraduates claimed him for their own. He loved all men, except the postman, and the postman alone loved him not. He would not have been canine if he had tolerated the letter-carrier (who, after all, is also a "dun-bearer" at Oxford). Originally he was an Oriel dog whose master lodged in Oriel Lane. Somebody has written that this thoroughfare is now called a street, but that is an absurd innovation. But the years passed, and the owner "went down," and "Bill" became an Oxford dog. Oxford owned him, or perhaps he owned Oxford. Like the wind he went where he listed. If he wanted a drive he took a cab, and cabby drove him to his old home, where the fare was paid. There was no sense in arguing with "Bill"; his answer was a smile, and "Bill's" smile was worse than his bite. Sometimes he would make the Mitre his headquarters, sometimes the Clarendon; at both he was welcome, and it is recorded that he had a great fancy for *les belles Américaines*. Occasionally he was smuggled into Oriel, where he sat up and dined like a good old English gentleman, and he was always welcome at adjoining Merton. Vices he had none, except a tendency to bar loafing. At the end of term he would see the undergraduates off from the

station; on "the day of returning" he would meet them there also. But his place for bidding farewell, and for greeting the returning host of friends was, it must be recorded with sorrow, the refreshment room. If sometimes, as the pictures show, he was disguised in academic habit or in football costume, he was also occasionally disguised in liquor, and the "Corn" itself was not wide enough for his staggering walk. But he grew out of that. Whether he swore off, or became capable of carrying his liquor steadily, is not known, and after all the failing was part of his genial nature; and at all times a child or a kitten could trifle with him. Let us part with him in the words of Sidney Smith:

"Contentedly through life he trotted
Along the path that fate allotted.

Then laid him down without a pain
To sleep, and never wake again."

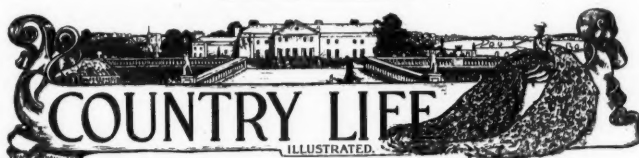
CANICULUS.

FAIRY RINGS.

WHEN rambling through the country fields few people can have failed to remark circlets of various sizes of grass, some small, others larger, which here and there dot the green surface of the sward. They are ever of a distinctly deeper hue than the rest of the turf, and are also in most cases surrounded by belts of bare ground. They are so much in evidence in all meadows as to attract the observation and excite the speculative curiosity of the most heedless. To these conspicuous circlets the name of fairy rings was long ago given, when the popular belief was that they were the work of the elves, and this somewhat apt and fanciful name continued to be applied to them until science came forward with a quite different and entirely prosaic explanation of their origin, one of course altogether unconnected with fairy-lore in any shape. The appearance of these rings being somewhat peculiar, contrasting so with the grass around, and no plausible reason being forthcoming for their presence there, little wonder need be felt at superstition connecting them with many strange stories. The country folk generally, however, preferred to set them down as the *al fresco* dancing grounds of the fairies, the chosen spots where these favourite romantic, ideal little conceptions of the mind were given to hold their nocturnal revels to ethereal music, where they gambolled, not gambled, on the turf through the night, and of course vanished in approved manner at the approach of morn. It was a matter of belief that they danced hand in hand in a ring, and hence it was surmised, nay thought, came about the circular form of these chosen spots in the pasture land. The grass on these places, too, it was observed, was ever avoided by the sheep. These really though did not abstain from browsing there out of deference to the fairies, but rather because they found it in such places not to their liking, inasmuch as it possessed a distinctly more sour flavour than the bulk. Shakespeare was aware of this singular fact, for in alluding to these circles in more than one of his plays he makes mention of it. In "The Tempest" there occur the lines, "Ye elves by moonshine do the sour green ringlets make, whereof the ewe bites not." According to Olaus Magnus, the belief in these places being the haunts of the fairies prevailed very generally amongst the nations of the earth. In Scotland too, we learn, the pensive ploughman when guiding his implement ever religiously avoided interference with them, knowing full well did he wantonly injure such spots he would have "nae luck" ever after. In England it is said a belief existed to a somewhat different effect, namely, that if a house were built on such a spot prosperity to the tenants would follow, though instances of such results having occurred are not given. Many attempts were from time to time made, some of a positively ludicrous character, to explain the cause of their existence, and it was very long before science came into the field, if we may be pardoned the remark, with a satisfactory elucidation of the matter. In the *Gentleman's Magazine*, about a century ago, a correspondence on the subject took place extending over several years concerning these phenomena, in which many speculations were advanced without in any satisfactory way elucidating the mystery. The consensus of opinion generally favoured lightning as being the cause; others put them down to the busy ants. A farmer, all of whose rings disappeared one season, wrote that he thought they arose from the working of moles underground. He was not alone in this somewhat singular belief, for Pennant, in his "British Zoology," favoured the like theory. The advocates of lightning, however, preponderated, one of whom, Jessop, author of "Philosophical Transactions," had observed a circle of three or four yards diameter whose rim was about a foot broad, newly burnt bare, as appeared from the colour and brittleness of the grass roots. Still the readers of *Sylvanus Urban* were not convinced, for in the following issue of the journal appeared a paper suggesting they were vestiges of trenches dug by the ancient Britons. "These trenches," said the writer, "gradually filling up by the annual decay of vegetables, and being necessarily lighter than the adjoining land, and consequently more retentive of water and less capable of enjoying the solar influence till later in the year, will not only be rendered more fertile, but the grass growing upon them is more perceptible than that in the neighbouring parts of the fields, especially in the autumnal quarter." This explanation, although very scientific, did not meet with any general acceptance. Then the idea was advanced that very likely the manure of the cattle feeding off the grass might be the cause; but another man of science, Sir David Dalrymple, the same who wrote "Annals of Scotland," came into the controversy, and said he had had fairy circles in his garden for twenty years, and cattle had never been there—a further complication. Lightning as being the cause retained its favouritism, and some years later this contention received the powerful support of the world-renowned Dr. Darwin, who in an elaborate paper argued that a stream of electricity issuing from a cloud and penetrating the earth would be drawn out in a cylindrical form, as is loose wool when drawn into thread, and would strike the ground at from two to ten yards in diameter; and as a stream of electricity displaces the air it passes through, it was plain no part of the grass could be calcined by it but just the external ring of that cylinder where the grass could have access to the air, since, without air, nothing could be calcined.

It was reserved for the well-known scientist, Dr. Wollaston, to furnish the true explanation of fairy rings. Living in the country, he had found many opportunities for observation on the subject. In a set of circles he found that certain fungi grew on the outside of the circles of dark grass. This led him to suppose that progressive increase from a central point was the probable mode of progression of the rings. He thought it likely that the soil which had once contributed

to the support of fungi might become so exhausted of some peculiar pabulum necessary for their production as to be rendered incapable of producing a second crop. The next year, therefore, they would only appear in a small ring surrounding the original centre of vegetation, and each succeeding year the lack of nutriment on one side would necessarily cause the new roots to extend in the opposite direction, and make the circle of fungi proceed by annual enlargement from the centre outwards. An appearance of luxuriance in the grass would follow, as the soil of the interior circle would always be enriched by the decayed roots of the fungi of the preceding year. During the growth of these fungi they so entirely absorbed all nutriment from the soil beneath that the herbage would be for a time destroyed and a ring appear bare of grass surrounding the dark ring. If a transverse section were then made of the soil beneath the ring the part underlying the fungi would be found to be paler than the soil on either side, but that which laid under the interior circle of dark grass would be found, on the contrary, to be considerably darker than the general surrounding. In the course of a few weeks after the fungi had ceased to appear, both the soil where they grew would again become darker and the grass would reappear with peculiar and increased vigour. This, then, is believed to be the real explanation of these circles, for it has never been since controverted, and hence is generally accepted as the truth on the subject. It has certainly necessarily dispelled, as is the way of science, all the romance so long attaching to fairy rings; but it has substituted a perfectly legitimate wonder in the tracing of one of those mysteries of Nature, and demonstrated once more that the productions of the earth all serve a purpose and obey a hidden law.



THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.

The Editor will be glad to receive for consideration photographs, instantaneous or otherwise, besides literary contributions, in the shape of articles and descriptions, as well as short stories, sporting or otherwise, not exceeding 2,000 words. Contributors are specially requested to place their names and addresses on their MSS. and on the backs of photographs. The Editor will not be responsible for the return of artistic or literary contributions which he may not be able to use, and the receipt of a proof must not be taken as evidence that an article is accepted. Publication in COUNTRY LIFE alone will be recognised as acceptance. Where stamps are enclosed, the Editor will do his best to return those contributions which he does not require.

Cottage Industries in Wales.

ON Thursday of last week Lady Wimborne's house in Arlington Street was the scene of a very interesting exhibition and sale of the products of what are called Home or Cottage Industries in Wales. The association which promoted the sale is supported by ladies of position, who are not only desirous of doing good, but successful in promoting a good object. It has branches in the counties of Glamorgan, Pembroke, Brecon, Anglesey, Denbigh, Flint, and Monmouth—Montgomeryshire can take care of itself, or the great factories can take care of themselves. There is no reason why Carnarvonshire should not be included, since in it remained at work, until a short time ago at least, one of the few remaining specimens

of the hand-loom in the cottage to be seen in Wales. It is a good object, we repeat, that these great ladies and others are endeavouring to further. To bring Welsh products, woollen cloths and flannels, and the like, into the English market, to encourage a reviving taste for the art of carving in wood which once flourished greatly in Wales, to endeavour to resuscitate the highly artistic skill in the making of pottery which was once to be found in Wales, particularly in South Wales, is a laudable enterprise and a praiseworthy purpose to which we wish all success.

But, by no means speaking without personal knowledge, we venture to say that this excellent industrial mission is in some danger of being betrayed by its journalistic friends. In excess of zeal and in defect of knowledge—which is quite excusable since even a London journalist cannot be expected to know everything, or to follow the etymology of a language which is foreign to him—the journalistic supporters of the association seem to be inclined to put the case too high. That is the most dangerous course which an advocate can adopt towards any case. The most important of the humble industries of Wales—the words “home” or “cottage” are practically inapplicable—is that of the manufacture of woollen cloths and flannels. To wood-carving the carving classes, with their elaborate tools and their stereotyped patterns traced upon the wood destined to be disfigured, have almost dealt the death blow. There are ancient three-decked cabinets (called, in Welsh, *tridarn*, which means simply “tripart”) which are beautifully carved in oak with the knife, *simpliciter*; the chisel never touched them, and there is no suggestion of the traced pattern upon them. The artist simply let his rich fancy play and his clever hand carry out the artistic thought as his work continued, and the result is beyond compare. The modern work, in our judgment, cannot approach these masterpieces in point of quality, and far too much of modern industry is expended in mauling fine-figured and ancient oak with chisel and punch and mallet upon conventional designs. But the woollen industry alone is of real importance, and it is in relation to this industry, which for reasons given below is worthy to be encouraged, that it is desired to emphasise one or two truths which are of some importance.

The whole of the mistake rises from a misapprehension. It has been written of the cloths, “they are made in the cottages with a handloom or ‘pandy,’ and their reputation for hard wear is equal to that of leather.” The second part of the statement is, *experto*, or must we say *expertis*, *credite*, as true as scripture; but the first part of it is very far from being accurate. We have worn Welsh cloth for shooting, for fishing, for every kind of exercise save hunting, involving exposure to storm and rain for years; it has been everlasting and waterproof always. But none of it has been made or purchased in a cottage with a handloom in it. If any charitable person thinks that in buying this grandly waterproof cloth he is encouraging a cottage industry, he is entirely mistaken; on the other hand, if he wishes to find a more sturdy protection against storm-driven wind, even our knowledge of sport and our experience of weather are powerless to help him. The fact is that a “pandy” is not, in common parlance, a cottage with a hand-loom, but something quite different. Probably it never was a cottage with a hand-loom. Certainly in the ancient Welsh Dictionary of Henry Richards the word does not occur at all; but “pan” is “the fulling of cloth,” and “ty,” which by the harmonious rules of Welsh euphony would become “dy” as an affix, is “a house.” At any rate, the “pandy” of to-day means—indeed, many of the establishments which were represented at Lady Wimborne's house are—a small factory. The factories are, very often, domestic institutions confined to a single family; but they are almost always in separate buildings; we have never seen one of them without water power, and we have seen many with steam power. That is a good thing. Silas Marner is a picturesque figure in literature, and it is true that he was a linen weaver, but the work of the hand-loom differs little with the material, and he was one of “certain pallid undersized men, who, by the side of the brawny hill-folk, looked like the remnants of a disinherited folk race.” It would be a rash thing to encourage hand-loom weaving, which is a most unhealthy occupation. But these factories, like those of Cadnant and Abergwaun, to select two from the North and South Poles of Wales, are capital institutions producing wares which have only to be made known in order to meet with abundant encouragement on the merits. It were a thousand pities if they were swallowed up in the great factories which cater for the million, offering cheapness and, on the whole, less nastiness than might be expected. The cloth from small factories has but one vice. It wears him who wears it, since it never perishes. It wears him all the more because, in most cases, it is of singularly hideous pattern. It is in correcting this fault that the Welsh Association has done much good and may do much more. But we have made trial ourselves, and those whom we wished to improve have invariably disobeyed directions on the ground that we should like tones and patterns of their choosing better than those which had been ordered.



THERE can be no doubt that the Whit Monday Cart-horse Parade was a complete success. No less than 655 vehicles passed before the eyes of the judges, Colonel Allan Maclean, Mr. P. A. Muntz, Professor Penberthy, and Professor Pritchard, and when it came to a matter of prize-giving by the Duchess of Portland the diplomas were exhausted. The presence of a good many teams of Suffolk horses was a welcome feature, and the encouragement given by the Suffolk Horse Society has clearly not been given in vain. There is no question, although the glossy coats of the horses are sometimes due to the surreptitious use of arsenic, that the parade and prizes have done a great deal to stimulate kindly treatment of London cart-horses by the servants of great firms.

The Great National Horse Show at the Crystal Palace, which commenced on Saturday last and terminated on Tuesday, affords a very striking instance of what energy, combined with a thorough knowledge of horse-flesh and the manners of the horse show world, can accomplish in the way of raising an exhibition in the course of three years to a leading event of the kind. To Mr. Vero Shaw, the popular manager of the Crystal Palace fixture, belongs the credit of, for the first time on record, having succeeded in attracting entries from America, Australia, the Continent, Scotland, Ireland, and, of course, England, to a show in this country, and all that can be said in relation to the gathering is that the collection was as interesting as it was unique. Class succeeded class in the show ring, and as each batch of horses was disposed of the men present remarked, "this cannot be beaten;" but it always was, as Mr. Shaw, like a good showman, kept back his trump cards until the last, the result being that the excitement amongst the spectators was maintained until the end. It is only fair, too, to congratulate the Crystal Palace Company upon the excellence of their arrangements, as well as the remarkable aptitude displayed by their officers discharging the duties undertaken by them. In Mr. Vero Shaw, of course, the directors possess a manager who, as a judge of horses, and as a recognised popular writer upon them, possesses a world-wide reputation, whilst his principal assistants, Mr. W. J. Nichols and W. L. Shaw, as ring stewards, and Thos. Erica, of coaching fame, as stable steward, are to be most heartily commended for the way they worked, as everything went like clockwork at the Crystal Palace Show. Mr. Henry Gillman, the general manager, and his directors, by their liberality and disinterestedness in engaging such able men to control affairs have proved their wisdom, as a better managed and more pleasant show it is impossible to imagine.

No doubt the Crystal Palace Show was seriously prejudiced by the funeral of Mr. Gladstone being arranged for its opening day, but nothing could affect the quality of the classes, which, taken all round, were the best we have ever seen. The Hunters were the weak spot, but the Palace management confess that this variety does not pay them, and so have reduced the classes in number; but yet the Earl of Orkney and Mr. W. Scarth Dixon, who took the place of the Earl of Coventry, found plenty of good horses to look over, and Messrs. Mason and Brown's Lyons Mail, which took the championship, is far above the average. In the saddle department there were, to our mind, only four really first-rate riding horses present, namely, Mr. F. V. Gooch's Cardigan, last year's champion, Rane, an Irish mare, and the sweet little cob, Ash Marna, which, together with the Belgian mare, Mr. Jenkins' Queen, monopolised all the "quality" in these classes, though, of course, Cardigan stood out by himself, and deservedly won the championship of the riding horses. Mr. Gooch, too, had a wonderful time of it in the harness class, thanks chiefly to the great excellence of his American purchase, Star of the West, which literally swept the board, and easily captured the championship of the single harness horses. A certain section of the public appeared disposed to grudge the American horse his victories, but they only displayed their prejudice by this, as he is the best-mannered horse we have seen for many a day, a grand goer, and as handsome as paint. Mr. Louis Miéville's Melton and Paradox made a grand show, but

were beaten by Star of the West and his pair Star of the East, in the tandems, the judges, who were driving men and not mere amateurs, invariably going for harness-horse quality and manners instead of mere high action and fighting the air. The Arab and Shetland Pony Classes were evidently appreciated by the public; in fact, the Palace Show was a very great and very instructive event.

To the very end the stars in their courses fought against the promoters of the show. A deluge of thundering rain on Tuesday rendered jumping out of the question, and greatly marred the picturesque competition of the road coaches. Six coaches, however, took part in it, the first prize going to Mr. Sheriff Dewar's splendidly horsed "Rocket," driven by Mr. Rcebuck. This is the Box Hill coach, an account of which appeared in our issue of May 21. The Windsor "Venture" (Mr. A. Fownes), was second, while the third was taken by Mr. Tom Haryeyton's "Old Times," driven by E. W. Fownes. Bullock, the tuneful guard of the "Old Times," whose skill we noticed last week, again carried off the silver horn. He is, indeed, a master of the yard of tin.

Here is a nice little conundrum which the lawyers will have pleasure in settling at the cost of the parties concerned. A four-in-hand was turning into Newgate Street, a leader reared and upset a baker's hand-cart, and the road was covered with loaves. A string of cyclists following one upon the other formed a human pyramid, with a zereba of machines, by reason of the loaves. Some machines were broken and the horse was killed. Some person or persons will of course have to pay, but the question of liability will be very hard to decide.

During last week the Solent racing fleet has had a busy time, for several regattas have been held. The competitors, however, were mostly last year's boats, for, although several new ones are announced for nearly all the classes, very few have thoroughly completed their outfit. Many are gradually getting into trim, the fine light weather of the last few days being particularly suitable for this sort of work. The opening day of the season of the Hythe Yacht Club witnessed Mr. T. F. Tower's Widgeon secure winning honours in the match for the Solent one-design class, while Captain J. D. Barry's Tangerine obtained second prize. Captain J. Orr-Ewing's Koorongah showed the way home to the thirty-six footers, she being followed by the only other competitor, Mr. E. S. Parker's Forella. The 30ft. match was won by Messrs. N. Robinson, F. Cook, and Lake's Carol, second prize falling to Colonel J. Clifton Brown's Petrel. Miss Cox's Speedwell, which has been raced with such remarkable success during the past two seasons, carried off the first prize in the 24ft. match, Thetis being second.

The agricultural situation does not improve. May has come and gone. It brought with it the long-needed moisture, and wells and ponds have been filled up. But the temperature has been very low, and the crops do not bear that promise of plenty which they showed on the last day of April. True, it would be easy to exaggerate the mischief that has been done. Dry, hot weather during the present and the next two months would do something to save the situation. Therefore we must hope for the best. The season has been exactly suitable for one department of the farm. For the coming root crop the promise is of the best. Mangolds and early swedes are showing above the ground, and drumhead cabbages have been planted and are thriving exceedingly. There are no complaints at present of the turnip fly. The only difficulty is with weeds, which require frequent hoeing in a season like the present.

The show season is upon us. Last week we had the Bath and West of England at Cardiff, which was meeting when the death of one of its founders, Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, was announced. Herefords and Welsh runts were, as might be expected, the features of the show. This week we have the Wiltshire Show at Swindon, the Notts Show at Nottingham, the Suffolk Show at Lowestoft, and the Midlothian Show at Edinburgh.

Everything points to the prospect of a heavier hay crop than we have had for some years, and this, in addition to the fact that in the past open winter there has been unusually little demand on the supply saved last year, should make the hay supply for next winter plentiful and cheap. The heavy rains of the latter half of May came just in the nick of time to start the grass growing strongly. Of course, there is one other thing needful besides a heavy grass crop for ensuring a good hay supply, and that is, fairly good weather for its saving. But there is no reason to take unnecessarily pessimistic views on this point, and with a normal season the hay crop should be rather more than normal.

We notice with pleasure the opening of the new cricket and recreation ground at Tunbridge Wells by the Marquess of Abergavenny on Monday last. The ground, which has cost £10,000 in the making, and is about twelve acres in area, will certainly be a great addition to the pleasures of the neighbourhood.

The play in the earlier days of the Irish Championship Lawn Tennis Tournament does not excite very much interest, but in a few of the matches last week, especially those which were of an International character, the players were watched with the keenest attention. The brothers Doherty, although genuine Irishmen in name and descent, represented Cambridge University and All England. H. L. Doherty, after a pretty tough fight (6-4, 6-3, 6-4) with H. A. Nisbet (All England) met and defeated R. W. Pringle (Mount Temple), when his brother, R. F. Doherty, who had beaten G. C. Bull-Greene and S. L. Fry, scratched to H. L. for the semi-final.

H. S. Mahony meeting H. L. Doherty in the final, defeated him by 3 sets to love (6-3, 8-6, 6-3). The match for the championship was eagerly watched on Saturday, when Mahony and Eaves met to try conclusions. Both were playing in fine form, but Mahony won the first set, 6-1. For the second set there was a tough fight, and after being 5 all, Eaves won, 7-5. The third set was also well contested and went to Mahony at 9-7. In the fourth, after being 5 all, Mahony, by excellent play, ran out the set at 7-5, and was hailed Irish Champion for 1898. Eaves played a good game, but hardly up to his form of last year.

In the final of the Ladies' Championship Singles, Miss C. Cooper beat Miss Martin (6-4, 10-8). The Mixed Championship Doubles went to H. A. Nisbet and Miss R. Dyas, who beat H. L. Doherty and Miss Bloxsome, 3 sets to nil. The Ladies' Championship Doubles were taken by Miss Martin and Miss Dyas, beating Miss C. Cooper and Miss O. Martin. The Fitzwilliam Plate was captured by E. P. Graham, and the Fitzwilliam Purse by H. A. Nisbet.

Mr. A. Sutherland, who has taken Rossport House, Co. Mayo, is making another attempt to introduce black game into Ireland. He is turning down a number of these birds under the superintendence of Scotch keepers. This has been tried several times before, but never met with any success. There is no reason why black game should not do well in the North and West of Ireland which to a great extent has very much the same climate, etc., as Scotland.

In these days, when a bicycle is as necessary an adjunct of each country-house visitor as a suit of dress clothes or a tea-gown, it has become more than ever important that the drives and approaches to the house should have a fairly smooth surface. It is extremely easy—in fact, the observation is forced on your notice—to detect the general bumpiness of an uneven road when you are riding over it rapidly; but very often, when you come to examine the road in detail, it is not too plain a matter to detect just where the depressions occur, and the exact area of the pitfalls that require patching. There is no better and easier way of finding these out than to go forth immediately after one of those heavy thunderous showers that we had the benefit of in some parts of England at the beginning of last week, and to make careful note of the places in which the water lodges most plentifully. It is a simple plan, and will save you no end of bother in level-taking or vague guessing, which will always leave some bad places undetected. Where the water is caught, there will the cycle wheel be caught also; we might almost say, "where the water lodges, there the cyclist dislodges," only that it would be a poor compliment to the riders. It is seldom that these inconsiderable depressions will actually cause a fall, but they cause many a bump that is discomforting.

A charming addition to the features of a garden-lawn is a little family of those quaint bantams with heavily-feathered legs, giving them the appearance of stout little people in knickerbockers and stockings much over-spatted. They are picturesque and laughable folk, very friendly, and harmless, as far as we can see, to the flower-beds. Perhaps they are too careful about the cleanliness of their spats to do as much as other fowls in the way of scratching, and it is amusing to play at poultry farming on this baby scale. They eat a number of insects, and do certainly as much good as they do mischief. As a rule, the hens seem to be good sitters and good mothers, and are just of the size to put on a setting of partridges' eggs, whether of the common or the Hungarian kind.

Partridges vary so much in the time of their hatch out in different seasons and in different parts of the country, that it is by no means too late, even for this season, to sing the praises of the Hungarian birds. They "do" well; they provide a

certainty of the infusion of that "new blood" which is so much to be desired, and in purchasing the eggs one need not be vexed by the haunting fear that maybe you are giving indirect encouragement to some egg-stealing poacher, though that is a trouble that need not harass your conscience if you are careful to get the eggs from reputable people. Reputable people, however, are not as numerous as they represent themselves to be. Pekin bantams is the name the fanciers give to these little fowls that we have suggested as good foster-mothers for the partridges, but it may be doubted whether they ever actually scratched and crowed in the city of the Summer Palace. Over the greater part of England the partridges were going about in pairs this year up to nearly the end of May, while, on the other hand, from a certain corner of England we were told of chicks hatched out quite at the beginning of the month.

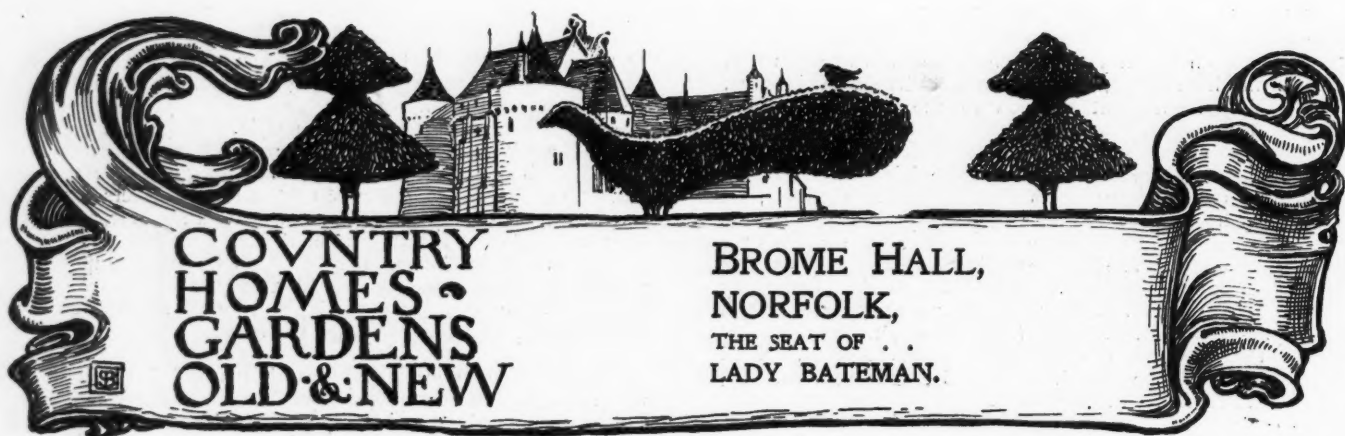
Thunderstorms are always capricious and local in their visits. Here and there they have been very severe, and in consequence the rivers in some parts far too flooded for fishing—the Teme we hear spoken of as flooded to a volume that few can remember to have seen before. It is thus that kind Nature is compensating us for the deficiency in our snowfall, which is the safest source of supply for our streams and springs. Other parts of the country have not been so lucky in getting this much desired deluge, and there are heavy arrears of water supply to make up. In these less favoured places, however, the fishing has been good, rivers just sufficiently supplied to make them fishable and not too coloured for the fly. And even those rivers that are temporarily out of order will reap permanent good from the floodings, for they have been pariously low during the last two summers in some parts; and one river we hear of—is it not the Cray, in Kent?—has vanished! We hope we may write "had" vanished, for the recent downpours may surely have helped to resuscitate it.

So far this year trout seem to have seen little attraction in that lure that is generally the most deadly of all, throughout the year, on all streams except those where the classic dry fly is in use. The March Brown, *au naturel*, has been a failure—there has been scarcely any hatch out of them; and in consequence the fish seem to have forgotten how good they are, and to have lost all taste for the artificial lure that copies them. Generally the blue and silver, or some modification of the blue dun, has been far more effective.

It is curious, in streams that are commonly rather sluggish, but yet not so deep but that a flood affects the pace of their current materially, to see how the fly-feeding fish are bothered by the rush of water. They are not accustomed to see the fly carried over their heads so fast, and in consequence you will again and again see them rising late, missing the fly, which is borne away from their snapping jaws, leaving them to close on empty air or water. It must be very annoying, and the singular thing is that the fish do not seem to learn by experience that they ought to bite quicker. They go on at the old rate, and the flies are perpetually borne past them. This does not happen either on those streams that are so deep and full-bodied that an extra dose of flood scarcely affects them, nor again on those brawling hill streams that are in a perpetual hurry, and so teach the trout to rise fast.

There is a lesson in all this for the angler. If he fishes up stream when the fish are thus missing the natural fly, it is not likely that the trout will be any cleverer in catching the artificial thing that he is offering them, and that is coming down to them no slower than the natural, and probably a little faster, as the draw of his line, however slack, must help it along a little. It is against all one's best instincts to counsel the down-stream fishing, and yet here is an exceptional instance in which it seems not only good but almost necessary. If the fly be let to float down stream the drag of the line arrests its motion, giving the fish a chance of catching it. Of course it is necessary, on this down-stream plan, to fish with a longer line, and to be even more careful to keep out of sight than when fishing up.

About the weight of fish that he has caught himself, the angler's conscience is apt to be elastic. It is seldom that the weight loses a deal in the telling. The heaviest fish on record taken in a certain beat of a certain well-known stream, where the fish, though good, do not run to a great size, was increased in a singular manner that is worth relating, if only for the side-light it throws on the omnivorous character of the trout. The record fish in question just turned the scale at 2-lb. Naturally the catcher was delighted. Especially was he pleased at the shape—the plump figure of the fish. He sent it to an appreciative friend in London who consigned it to the cook, to be dressed for dinner. On cutting the fish open, the cook was surprised to find inside it what is described in the telling of the story as "a large rat." This, although a fish tale, is a true one.



COUNTRY HOMES & GARDENS OLD & NEW

BROME HALL,
NORFOLK,
THE SEAT OF . .
LADY BATEMAN.

THIS beautiful seat of Lady Bateman—crewhile of the Cornwallis family—has gardens about it of formal character, as has been explained, not dating, however, from the days when such gardening came in, or rather was grafted by foreigners upon the formal style of our gardening in the previous age, but laid out about fifty years ago. Whether the visitor approve the binding down of Nature to the prim lines of the garden-planner, and the handing over of her products to the skill of the pleacher, or revel rather in the simpler scenes where she displays her charms more at her own sweet will, he cannot fail to admire the skill and cleverness with which the topiary trees and straight paths and drives at Brome Hall have been arranged.

A terrace extends along the south and west fronts of the house, looking over from which, at a depth of about 6ft., another and much larger terrace of gravel is seen. This second terrace is laid out with patches of green turf, and with box beds of geometrical design, dotted with English yews of perfect symmetry. Yews are always beautiful, and give character and form to many a noble garden; but the arrangement adopted for the box beds at Brome Hall does not at all commend

itself to the writer. It is peculiar, and, properly speaking, is not gardening at all, for the beds are inlaid, as it were, with broken tiles, such as are used for paving entrance halls, with the purpose of introducing colour, the particular scheme chosen consisting mostly of blue, grey, and white. Thirty or forty years ago it was not uncommon to find beds filled with stones, intended to create colour effects without the use of flowers. In these days a truer idea prevails of what a garden should be, and most persons will certainly agree that it should be a place devoted to all that is beautiful in flower life.

It must not be concluded that true garden glories are wanting at Brome Hall. Very far from this, indeed. The terrace walls are adorned with statuary and with vases, about which tea and noisette roses twine their flower-laden stems. All through the summer the place is redolent with the fragrance of the queenly flower, for the rose is there largely cultivated in every form, from the dainty tea varieties to the vigorous climbers, which lift aloft their glowing burdens to the sun.

The south terrace overlooks the tennis lawns, which are surrounded with borders of hardy plants, with conifers and flowering shrubs in the background. This is a delightful spot





GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—BROME HALL: ARCHES OF VERDURE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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indeed, restful in its charm, and rich in colour when the lily, larkspur, sunflower, and other bold perennials throw up their sheafs of flowers against the fine background of the deep green shrubs. Amongst these rise graceful bamboos, which now, fortunately for our English gardens, we begin to know more of, with laburnums, the mock-orange, or *Philadelphus*, lilacs, spiræas, and Forsythias, those golden-flowered climbers of March. All this beauty of tree and shrub is heightened by the sombre hue of the purple beech, and relieved again by the beautiful sheen of the silver maple. During the months of spring, when the tints are freshest, this mingling of silver and rich brown in trees and shrubs is not less happy in its effects than the most charming associations of flower colouring.

On the lawn there is a fine specimen of *Biota orientalis*, about 30ft. in height, while on the western side of this fine green expanse rises a beautiful example of the *Magnolia conspicua*. This is a Chinese tree, and the present example is about 20ft. in height. Unfortunately it was damaged about three years ago by the fall, during a storm, of a neighbouring tree, which carried away part of its branches. In spring, even before the frosts have left us, all who know the lovely magnolia look for its multitudes of great waxen lily-like flowers, which cover every branch, and give it the colloquial name of the lily-tree. The tree at Brome Hall is one among many which invest English gardens with an unfamiliar charm.

Interesting walks intersect the grounds in various directions. One extends the whole length from east to west, and is delightfully picturesque and quaint. The formality of Brome Hall is rarely, if ever, extravagant; but here, as the visitor walks along between the yew fences that flank the way, his attention is attracted by the curious figures formed in the leafy growth—animals, heraldic designs, and other strange devices. Running from this yew walk to the north is another over the turf, known as "The Spong." This delightful way is enriched, as we traverse the velvety turf, by splendid mixed borders on each side, backed by flowering trees and shrubs. There is a subtle charm about this place that tempts one to linger in the sequestered glade, especially when the flowers open in the spring, and the shrubs begin to bear their multitudinous blossoms. All the world knows the beauties of the grass walks at Kew, and such features are, indeed, the glory of many gardens. We have



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THE TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

already illustrated the turf walk at Fairfield, and may yet depict several more.

Continuing along the walk referred to we reach an avenue of well-trained Irish yews, with masses of hybrid perpetual roses in beds between them. The combination of yews and roses is unusual and striking, making beautiful colour pictures, while the scene is more restful than some bright flower gardens. The rose beds are edged with variegated euonymus (*E. radicans variegatus*) and periwinkle (*vincas*).

There is beauty, too, in the walls of the house, and even in the kitchen garden facing the pleasure grounds. A glorious growth of climbers covers the bare surfaces, and climbers are not often seen in such variety. *Ceanothus azureus*, *Akebia quinata*, *Jasminum grandiflorum*, *J. nudiflorum*, *Chimonanthus fragrans*, and *Magnolia grandiflora* are among the throng. The *Chimonanthus fragrans* deserves especial mention. It is a shrubby climber, which bears its fragrant lemon-tinted flowers in mid-winter—whence its happy name of "Winter Sweet"—when the *Jasminum nudiflorum* is also wreathed with golden blooms.

But the pleasures of Brome Hall are not exhausted. In the lower part of the gardens there is an oblong pond overshadowed by a fine weeping willow (*Salix Babylonica*). Yet if one has seen only the glorious roses and the trained yews of this beautiful abode, the visit will have been abundantly instructive and interesting.



Romance on the Stage.

IT may be permissible at this stage to enlarge on a text upon which of late I have frequently, but briefly, dealt: the text of the charm and attraction of Romance on the stage; the saddening and debasing nature of the drama of modern passion and social problems. Take it for all in all, there can be no doubt that if plays dealing with life of the period are noble and inspiring plays, if they deal loftily with great subjects—if, in fact, a nineteenth century Shakespeare arose among us—they form the most

splendid drama of all. But till that time comes, till our playwrights do not think it necessary that the drama of to-day should treat morbidly of the sexual problem, or light-heartedly of marital infidelity, we can only hope that the drama of adventure, of the olden days of romance, of picturesque incidents and colourful escapades, will come to stay—as, indeed, there is every sign that it has come.

Mr. Pinero at his best, Mr. Jones at his best, approach nearly to that drama of our life as we see it; but even they seem to have been restricted to writing around the ethics of the sexes

—one narrow side of them; more—for some time, at any rate, they have ceased to be serious at all. Mr. Pinero is represented by a delightful comedy of other days; Mr. Jones confines himself to placing, in a pleasant and flippant light, the inconstancy of woman and the sourness of man. As for other "serious" plays, they have been beneath serious consideration.

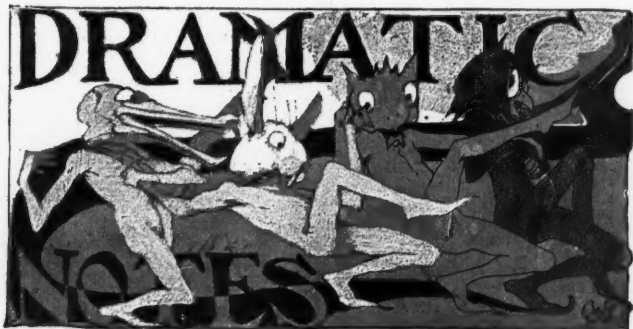
My excuse for this little sermon is to be found in the fact that the claims of romance, which I have unceasingly urged in these columns, and "in another place," will be put forward very forcibly during the next theatrical season. Look where one will, the autumn promises us such a feast of healthy—if not strikingly intellectual—romance as we have not had during the present generation. There is hardly a theatre of the first-class in which the silk hat and the swallow-tail coat will not be taboo. The Lyceum will not be occupied in the autumn by Sir Henry Irving, but it is more than probable that we shall see there a worthy substitute, one who will place such poetry and glamour on the stage as we are not often fortunate enough to see in these prosaic times; romance at its highest. Mr. Tree, at Her Majesty's, will reproduce for us the glittering romance of "The Three Musketeers"; Mr. Alexander will provide for us either the warlike romance of the battle-field, when the Red and White Roses divided England into opposite camps, or, in "Change Alley," the romance of the Georgian Stock Exchange. Even Mr. Wyndham, high priest of modernity, will for once forsake the Liberty dressing-room and the Albany Chambers for the palaces of old Genoa; and the Criterion Theatre, passing from libertine farce through the stages of genteel comedy and satire, will resound with the courtly phrases of a bygone day instead of the "Society" banter of the "smart set."

It may be that a notable exception will be found at the Haymarket, till now, under its present management, devoted solely to romance; it may be that in the autumn "The Little Minister" will give place to a modern comedy by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones. But, if so, the proof of this exception proves the rule.

Even in the realms of music, even on the lighter lyrical stage, it seems as if modernity is doomed—as if the days of frock-coated "musical comedy" are over. The Gaiety has returned to costume and colour; Daly's will retrace its steps as far as Ancient Rome; the saucy and up-to-date "French Maid" is to be succeeded at the Vaudeville by old-fashioned extravaganza, set in the time of the Armada; the Savoy will uphold worthily its reputation with a romantic opera of mediæval times—and so, all round, romance regains its sway. To complete the list, Miss Kate Vaughan is at Terry's, bringing back to us "She Stoops to Conquer." "Verily, the wheel has turned full circle."

Of course, the reaction will come. A surfeit of paint and powder will bring about the return of modern plays. But much may happen ere then. A great new author may have arisen; the struggle of woman for "freedom" may have ceased to be a fad; a great war may bring about the epic which seems only to be born when wives and mothers, thinking of husbands and sons who never may return, give to the world great poets. Or, if these surmises be too far-fetched, it is at least not hopeless to expect a change in the train of thought in dramatic literature; and any change must be for the better, it could not be for the worse.

B. L.



THE season is now in full swing, the Opera is well under weigh, the Park is crowded, and the fashionable theatres are attended by well-dressed audiences. It is a sign of the times that only the cleanest and most wholesome dramatic fare is meeting and has met with adequate patronage, and a note of purity has been struck, the echoes of which will not die away for a very long time to come. The British public has proved itself more austere than the Republican population in New York, for a certain work that shall be nameless failed here, and was a great success in the commercial capital of the United States. We need not be smug about it, however, for it is probable that it was the cosmopolitan mixture which is only to be found in New York that made this play financially successful there. In any other town in the States it is likely that its reception would have been nearer to its reception in London than that in New York.

Mr. Lewis Waller has now made public the lines along which his version of "The Three Musketeers," by the poet-dramatist, Mr. Henry Hamilton, will run. It will be a very different play from that we shall see at Her Majesty's, for Mr. Hamilton, unlike Mr. Grundy, has attempted the bold task of dealing

with the entire story of the novel, while Mr. Grundy has only treated of the "diamond" side of it. The gloomier notes of the book—the death of Buckingham, and all that leads up thereto—are ignored in the adaptation prepared for Mr. Tree; but in the piece which Mr. Waller will produce in the suburbs and provinces, not only these incidents, but a selection from all the important situations of Dumas, will be given. There is an interesting point in connection with the representation of these two dramas. Both Mr. Tree and Mr. Waller will be the D'Artagnans in their own plays; but in the autumn Mr. Waller is under engagement to return to Mr. Tree, and he will then interpret either the character of Buckingham or Athos at Her Majesty's.

It is just as probable as not that we shall see Mr. Louis Parker's adaptation from the French of "Le Chemineau"—which he has named "Ragged Robin"—before the close of the present season at Her Majesty's, as I have hinted previously. This will not mean that "Julius Caesar" has exhausted its popularity, but that Mr. Tree's lengthy programme will be woefully disarranged if he does not perform "Ragged Robin" this summer. He is under contract to do it; he is also under an engagement to present "The Three Musketeers"—which, by the way, will probably be known under another name—and he is also pledged to a grand production of "King John" early next year; so that if he does not begin to meet some of his artistic obligations, he will find himself clogged up. For some time to come, it is pleasing to know, we are assured of fine spectacles at Her Majesty's, which is as it should be, for the theatre is now one of the representative English playhouses, one of the great Temples of Dramatic Art where we expect the national dramatic standard to be upheld. It is a great theatre and a large theatre, and everything done there must be great and large.

After the present season London will bid a sad good-bye to Sir Henry Irving and his company for many months to come, for Sir Henry's tour will be a long one. As we are to have pantomime day and night at the Lyceum at Christmastime, it seems that we shall not welcome Sir Henry back to his home until about March next—a long interval for the metropolis to be without its leading actor. There is consolation in the fact, however, that during a portion of Sir Henry's absence his theatre will be occupied by a most worthy *locum tenens* from abroad; just who that *locum tenens* will be I am not at present at liberty to disclose. But, should the embargo be withdrawn and the announcement be made elsewhere before the next issue of COUNTRY LIFE, remember my words, and you will agree with me that Sir Henry's tenant is thoroughly worthy of even the classic boards of the Lyceum.

Reverting for a moment to what is, perhaps, the most interesting item of dramatic gossip, all theatrical London is asking where Mr. Tree is going to find the Miladi of "The Three Musketeers." The character is a superb one, from the acting point of view; indeed, there is hardly in all fiction a creation which would make greater demands on the part of an actress. It is a rôle that the finest artist living would be proud to play; and as neither Miss Ellen Terry nor Mrs. Patrick Campbell is available, Mr. Tree is in somewhat of a quandary for a fitting representative. Next to the two ladies I have mentioned, Miss Julia Neilson, perhaps, would be nearest to the ideal; but it is understood that Miss Neilson's services have been retained elsewhere—it is rumoured by the management of Drury Lane for the autumn drama there—so Mr. Tree's choice is sadly circumscribed, and I believe that, so far, among all the prominent ladies who have asked to be allowed to play the part, he has not been able to fix upon one who absolutely fulfils his idea of the requirements of the character. Some gossips have mentioned the name of Miss Olga Nethersole in this connection, but I believe their shots have not hit the mark. We are all anxious for a solution of the mystery.

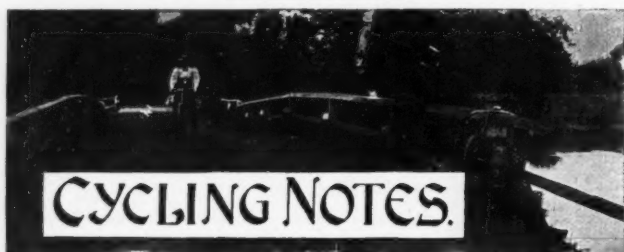
Ere these lines are in type the anxiously awaited new comic—not exceedingly comic, according to its authors—opera will have made its appearance at the Savoy Theatre. A work by our leading composer, Sir Arthur Sullivan, our leading dramatist, Mr. Pinero, and so notable a litterateur as Mr. Comyns Carr, is necessarily removed from the average among theatrical productions, and next week I hope to be able to chronicle a huge success for the distinguished triumvirate. It is not so much a comic as a romantic opera—which is, perhaps, an advantage, if the romance is of the right kind, and comicality is not entirely absent. However, we shall see.

FROM THE PAVILION.

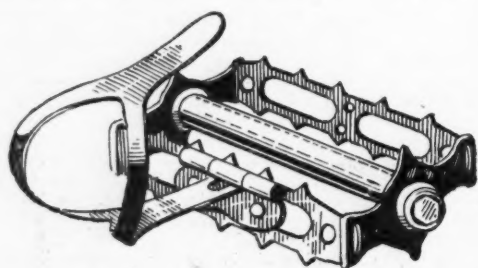
A WONDERFUL match was that between Notts and Sussex, though Notts once again has exhibited its marvellous capacity for playing a drawn game. But this time it was their merits that drew a game in which the changes were sensational. People have talked a good deal against the rage for golf, saying that it is "an old man's game," but it truly seems rather as if we ought to say the same of cricket. Whose are a few of the most notable centuries we have seen this year in first-class cricket? "W. G.'s," Arthur Shrewsbury's, and William Gunn's. These men are not quite boys, and the boys have nothing quite so good to set against them. Shrewsbury's and "W. G.'s," too, were each something better than a century—something better than a century and a-half apiece, and not out at that. This is not a bad account for the old people to give of themselves. Some old folks, however, we are sorry to see joining the ranks of the superannuated—by their own act, let us hasten to add. We have a grand new pavilion at the Oval, but what is it to sit in those seats and look out on a Surrey match without a Read in the field? Maurice, indeed, with his smart figure and smart fielding, we have had to do without for a year or two, but Mr. "W. W.," most excellent of bats on a fast wicket, is a more recent loss, and therefore we miss him the more. These two have served Surrey cricket grandly, and have well earned all the *otium cum dignitate* that their respective professions—there is more of dignity than of leisure about Mr. "W. W.'s" professional calling, may be—can assure them. Notts, after declaring their innings closed, had of course all the best of the situation at the draw, but Sussex never looked like being beaten. Mr. de Montezuma again, as in the first innings, did yeoman's service for them. Lancashire and Derbyshire made a less interesting match of it—less sensational would be the better term, perhaps, for there was an interest as to the result of the match between these that was only for a brief while in evidence on the Brighton ground. It was quite on the cards that Derbyshire might win, but Lancashire had gained a useful lead of 60 or 70 on the first innings, getting the county of the Peak all out for 73, and putting them in a second time to make 170 odd. It was just by the balance gained on the first innings that they won the match, the two sides scoring within a run of each other on the second venture. The wicket all through was a bowler's wicket, Hulme for Derbyshire and Briggs for the victors having the best analyses.

All our bowlers, it is evident, will have to set their houses in order, for they are being subjected—partly as the result of Mr. Stoddart's recent tour in Australia—to some shrewd criticism, not the least drastic being directed on them by Mr. Lyttelton, who roundly accuses them of lacking head and science. J. Hearne has done well again since he returned to this country, but he was not good enough for the Colonials on colonial wickets. And what have we of good stuff coming on? It is early in the season to indulge in prophecy, but Rhodes, for Yorkshire, is surely a good discovery. Mr. Cunliffe is another with whom great things are possible. We wonder whether young bowlers study and assimilate sufficiently Mr. A. G. Steel's remarks on bowling in the Badminton cricket book. They have always seemed to us to be inspired by little less than a genius for imparting the methods by which he—a truly scientific and "head" bowler, if ever there was one—made such a success of his art. It must always remain a regret to those of us who watched Mr. Steel at his zenith that he retired so soon from first-class cricket.

LONG-SLIP.



A NEW toe-clip has been introduced by the Folding Toe-Clip Company, St. Mary's Gate, Manchester, which has a great deal to recommend it on the score of convenience. As shown in the illustration herewith, it is fixed to the front plate of a rat-trap pedal in the customary manner, but instead of being rigid it is hinged. As a result the clip can be pulled forward, so that the point passes between the centre tube of the pedal and the rear plate, and thus does away with the lengthy projection which is so often a source of inconvenience. It is not to be supposed that a man would fold the clips back immediately on dismounting, whenever he had occasion to trundle his machine along the street or up a steep hill; but there are frequent occasions when he would be glad to do something of the kind. On putting his machine into a railway van, for instance, an instantaneous folding of the toe-clip would improve the chances of the



machine not being entangled with other cycles already in the van; and, as regards storage in general, it may be conceded that the fewer projections the better.

There is a slight tendency in actual riding, I find, for the

clip to fold itself when not wanted; not when the foot is actually in position, but when mounting, for instance. The dive of the toe may just catch the top of the clip instead of gliding into place. That, however, is not a sufficient drawback to counteract the advantage of being able to fold the clip when that seems desirable. Possibly there is something, also, in the contention of the makers of this article that the hinge relieves the foot from strain, owing to the slight amount of play in the hinge during the various phases of anking. I cannot say that I have experienced any particular disadvantage in this respect in the ordinary pattern, nor any special gain in the movability of the article under notice. If this gain does exist, however, it may be set against the tendency to fold up when not wanted. Apparently the folding toe-clip is not made for rubber pedals, but there should be no difficulty in providing another method of attachment besides the one shown herewith.

The point is often debated, by the way, as to whether toe-clips are advantageous or not, and, even if advantageous in some respects, whether their use is advisable. Considering the number of these articles now in use, it would require a considerable amount of evidence to show that they were either ineffective or undesirable. Speaking generally, I am of the opinion that they are neither. We must first premise, however, that the art of anking has been acquired. One could not do the novice a worse turn than provide him with a pair of toe-clips before he has cycled for at least a year. It would be almost impossible for him to acquire a correct ankle action in these circumstances, as he would never emerge from a digging style. But I am prepared to contend emphatically that, once the art of anking has been acquired, it can be put into practice just as well with toe-clips as without, and that no scientific anker would ever allow his clips to disturb his method of anking, which, after being mastered, becomes instinctive.

The great virtue of toe-clips, apart from their undoubted assistance when a more than ordinary degree of power is to be applied, is their security. This applies in two ways. When pushing hard the full power of the leg may be employed without danger of the foot slipping forward, as may otherwise occasionally happen, either on a blunted rat-trap pedal, or one of rubber that has become slippery in the rain. But the other factor of safety is still more important. When riding fast down hill a skilful pedaller can keep his feet, according to the neatness of his style and the degree of his agility; but the best of pedallers is liable to have his feet jerked off by a sudden jolt on a rough road. Toe-clips are a considerable aid in limiting the probability of this untoward happening, and, always providing that the art of anking has first been acquired, their use may reasonably be enjoined.

Electric lamps make but poor progress towards the satisfaction of the cyclist's requirements. They are heavy, they are expensive, and they are inconstant. The self-generating type one seldom sees, the trouble being that the same factor of speed which produces the light will also cause the lamp to fuse after a given limit has been reached. With the secondary batteries, on the other hand, there is always the nuisance and expense of recharging, with

occasional possibilities of running out midway on a journey. I was shown the other day, however, a lamp of the self-generating type, which appears to promise well, though at present it does not seem to be quite perfect. The chief point about it is that, instead of generating light to an unlimited degree, in direct ratio to the growing speed of the machine, it has been found possible to describe a limit beyond which the candle-power shall not be increased, although the pace of the machine may be accelerated indefinitely. This is an important discovery, and if the lamp in question can be put on the market in a simple and not too expensive form, it should have far better prospects of success than any of its predecessors.

Notwithstanding the vast increase in the ranks of those whom one may term legitimate cyclists, as opposed to the merely "scorching" type, one has still to note the presence of not a few riders on the road who are addicted to the use of the full-dropped handle-bar. On the race path, in sprinting races, at all events, the ram's-horn pattern is indispensable; on the road it is as ridiculous as it is hideous. But it is also dangerous to all concerned, because the rider's eyes are facing the ground, and it is practically impossible for him to maintain a forward glance for any length of time. On the asphalt pavement of American boulevards a good deal of "scorching" is habitual, this type of handle-bar being very common on Yankee mounts. Two months ago a decree was passed in Washington, and is now in force in that city, insisting that no rider shall be allowed to use a machine with a more accentuated drop than one of four inches, which itself is by no means slight. No doubt this appeared at the time a piece of more or less grandmotherly legislation, but its wisdom has inferentially been proved by a recent occurrence in New York, when two cyclists charged each other violently and were hurled high into the air. One of them, it appears, was riding a very highly-g geared machine, and was scorching at a speed which caused a cycling policeman to warn him to slow down. Instead of heeding the warning, he quickened his pace, and the policeman gave chase. With head bent down the cyclist did not see another wheelman who was approaching—whether the latter was riding in a similar position the narrative does not say—and they collided with tremendous force; both are in hospital suffering from concussion of the brain.

THE PILGRIM.

ON THE GREEN.

ALL the interest of recent golf has been focussed on the green of the Royal Liverpool Club at Hoylake and in the fight for the amateur championship of the game. The result, in spite of the arena of contest being on the home green of those mighty players, Mr. Ball and Mr. Hilton, has been a triumph for Scotland, the four men left in in the semi-final heats all coming from over the Border. The truth, with regard to Mr. Ball at all events, is that he was not seen at his best throughout the play. He scrambled through a certain number of heats, surviving by little short of a miracle in his match with Mr. W. E. Fairlie, who was two up and two to play, had the shortest of putts to win the match at the seventeenth hole, but failed to hole it, and was beaten at the nineteenth. A real good player, Mr. Robb, the runner-up in last year's amateur championship, was the man to put him out, after a hard fight. Mr. Robb had just before put out Mr. Horace Hutchinson also, although the latter had been two up only five holes from home. "Two up and five to play never wins the match" is an old wisacre paradox of St. Andrews, which for once came true here. But Mr. Robb was himself disposed of, after a great fight, by Mr. Mure Fergusson in the semi-final tie, the latter having been down all the way, but just getting his nose in front on the post—a common trick of his. Mr. Tait's matches all through were watched with tremendous interest, and most of them justified the interest by the closeness of the finish. Singularly enough the easiest, most hollow victory he had was over the redoubtable Mr. Hilton, who had played magnificent golf in the early ties, but seemed quite another man when he came face to face with Mr. Tait. Perhaps the memory of a previous championship two years ago was with him. Then, in the thirty-six hole final, Mr. Tait beat him severely by seven up and six to play, and now he gave him a far worse beating, by six holes, on the eighteen. Mr. Hutchings, previously to this, had run Mr. Tait very hard, only succumbing at the nineteenth hole played. A record incident of the tournament was the match between Mr. Farrar and Mr. Darwin, which was not settled until twenty-four holes had been played, so continuously, after a halved match, did the players go on halving hole after hole. But the "finish" of the whole tournament, the greatest finish, perhaps, that has ever been seen, was in the semi-final match between Mr. Tait and Mr. Low. The play was not too good throughout this match, but after some rather indifferent work Mr. Low was a hole up with three to play, and Mr. Tait in the bunker going to the next. But his third shot, on to the green from some 200 yds. distance, is one of those shots that must become historic. It saved his life, and at the eighteenth hole the players were even. The nineteenth was halved without incident. At the twentieth Mr. Tait's second was too strong. His third back again past. Mr. Low was faultlessly dead in three. Again Mr. Tait saved himself by a really long putt. At the twenty-first hole he drove out of bounds; but, dropping another ball, with less of distance, played three absolutely perfect shots, of which the last lay within a yard and a-half of



the hole. Mr. Low again holed in a faultless five, and again Mr. Tait holed in five—not faultlessly, but very brilliantly. At the Cop hole the end came. Mr. Tait was here the faultless one, holing in three, Mr. Low failing to hole a four-foot putt for the half. Hard lines, beyond doubt, were Mr. Low's portion in thus having these brilliant recoveries to play against. He played the steadier golf, but—he lost, and Mr. Tait and Mr. Mure Fergusson were left to play the final tie.

The final rounds produced some excellent play, and resulted in favour of Mr. Tait. Nor can the issue be said to have been fluky; for, if the winner made some lucky drives—he lay but 6yds. from the hole at one of them—he had some most unfortunate lies also, and his triumphs over great difficulties were noteworthy. He won eventually, by seven up and five to play, a handsome and unquestionable victory.



OF all the wonderful works of William Makepeace Thackeray, "Pendennis" has always possessed the greatest charm for me. It may not have all the pungency of "Vanity Fair," or be able to boast the perfect construction which marks "Esmond." But it is unspeakably human, and I make in all candour the concession that it has influenced my career in life and my choice of an occupation. I have lived in the Temple, humbly endeavouring to follow in the footsteps of Arthur Pendennis. I had my Warrington, less intelligent but with quite as much fierce honesty about him. I wrote my "Walter Lorraine," and it won no great success. In a word, I followed meekly in the footsteps of Arthur Pendennis, to the infinite sorrow of many who have been compelled to read my words at various times, but to my own mighty contentment. My friend and I were pocket editions; that was the worst that could be said of us.

With what joy, therefore, do I now refer to Mrs. Ritchie's introduction, in this case truly biographical, to "Pendennis," in the fine edition of the master's work now being brought out by Messrs. Smith, Elder. The publishers, be it remembered, are the same firm who owned and brought out the old *Cornhill*, in the days when Thackeray sat in the editorial chair and wrote, among many charming "Roundabout Papers," that immortal essay entitled "Thorns in the Cushion." It was one of the truest things, and the most sympathetic, that ever was written, and the thorns are there still. No luckless man is there among the many who have to select the most promising out of many contributions, good, bad, and indifferent, who does it without pain. The luckless widows, the struggling young men, and, more pitiful still, the older men who have fallen behind in the race, are with us still. Their appeals on impossible grounds still wring the heart; their resentful disappointment still pains and angers. Of all the pieces that Thackeray wrote, that essay seems to me the best and the most true.

But it was not "Pendennis." Now this unpretentious and graceful little essay by Mrs. Ritchie, put together with dainty ease by an accomplished daughter who treasured every memory of the father whom she loved, tells me exactly what I wanted to know, to wit, that "Pendennis" was in large measure autobiographical. That was always suspected, but never definitely known before. "Pendennis," in a word, was drawn largely from Thackeray's own experiences; but, where those experiences were of oppression by his elders, his abundant charity has made him tone them down. Nobody will ever forget the famous scene which was being enacted at Greyfriars when the Major appeared

to bring Arthur home, or the merry humour with which the story is told. It was really a charitable description of a very bitter experience. Here is the truth, in a letter written to Thackeray's home: "Doctor Russell has treated me every day with such manifest unkindness and injustice that I really can scarcely bear it. It is hard when you are endeavouring to work to find your attempts nipped in the bud. If ever I get a respectable place in my form he is sure to bring me down again; to-day there was such a flagrant instance of it that it was the general talk of the school. I wish I could take leave of him to-morrow."

Think you, Sir or Madam, that the like injustice is not perpetrated in many a great public school to-day, or that your sons, in these enlightened times, do not writhe under oppression rising merely from lack of appreciation, not from cruelty? Be assured that you are in error. The process is perfectly well known among schoolboys, and at one school is known as "brocking" (*i.e.*, lulling) down. It has been known to be reproved by an adventurous repartee. A boy, now a barrister of good standing, was being victimised in this fashion by a placid, scholarly, persistent, and, in reality, kindly don. At last he rose, walked to the bottom of the class, and took his seat there, remarking that he thought he would save trouble by going there at once. There were consequences, but they were worth bearing, for the lesson was felt by the master no less than the punishment was felt by the boy.

Then Fairbairns was the home in Devonshire, and Pen's mare Rebecca was Thackeray's mount, and the sketches of "Oxbridge" were drawn from Cambridge memories, and Charles Lamb Kennedy sat as model for the face of Pen, and a great illness of Thackeray preceded the period at which the account of Pen's illness in the Temple was written. The whole may be, indeed is, full of drolleries and good-humoured exaggerations, but the fundamental truth and humanity is in it, and that is the beginning and the end of the whole matter.

How often have honest men and women, not ashamed to confess that they had warm hearts, felt their eyes grow warm and wet over the death-bed of Helen. Upon my word I am inclined to feel the same sympathy as I read, that as he was writing those beautiful passages, his daughter came and interrupted (as wives and daughters will interrupt, bless them), and he motioned her away; and how afterwards he came to the schoolroom, half laughing and half ashamed, and said, "I do not know what James can have thought of me when he came in with the tax-gatherer just after you left, and found me blubbing over Helen Pendennis's death."

It has always been a delight to me to read "Pendennis," and Mrs. Ritchie has made it more precious than ever. I make no apology for devoting my space to her essay, for there is no topic of the moment of equal interest. None the less, I am delighted to see that Miss Marie Corelli has repudiated the title assigned by *Literature* to her next novel.

Books to order from the library:—

- "Through Persia on a Side-saddle." Ella C. Sykes. (Innes.)
- "Sons of Adversity." L. Cope Cornford. (Methuen.)
- "Through Unknown Thibet." Captain M. S. Welby. (Unwin.)
- "Sir Tristram." Thorold Ashley. (Ward, Lock.)
- "The Tragedy of a Nose." E. Gerard. (Digby.)
- "Egypt in 1898." G. W. Stevens. (Blackwood.)

LOOKER-ON.



THE weather, although nothing like that we are accustomed to associate with May, was not quite so disastrous during last week as that of the first three weeks of the month, and it really looks now as if we are going to get a little good polo at last. At Hurlingham, on Thursday last, the



Blues played their well-known team, consisting of Messrs. C. E. Rose, R. Ward, D. C. Marjoribanks, and Captain Fitzgerald (back), against the Inniskillings, represented by Messrs. C. H. Higgins, G. K. Ansell, Neil Haig, and Major Rimington (back). This last was almost the same team that won the Regimental Tournament last year, but they have not been playing together much this season, and they sold most of their ponies at the end of last July, so that I rather expected the Blues to beat them. However, they once more showed what a really good hard-hitting team they are, and after a close and exciting game they won by 3 goals to 2. Mr. Ansell was in great form and hit two goals, whilst their new No. 1 played a good game throughout, and also scored once. Major Rimington played his usual sound game at back, and Mr. Neil Haig hit as hard as he always does. For the losers Mr. Ward was very conspicuous throughout, and the Blues will probably improve a lot, as they did last year, before they play their first match in the Inter-Regimental Tournament.

In the second match, which was between the all-conquering Rugby and the Wanderers, we looked forward to seeing some very first-class polo, and we were not disappointed. Unfortunately, Mr. E. D. Miller had the bad luck to put his shoulder out early in the game, but his place was taken by Mr. Walter Jones, and Rugby won by 7 goals to 3, four of which were hit by Captain Renton, two by Mr. Dryborough, and one by Mr. G. Miller. The Wanderers team, made up of Messrs. Freake, Buckmaster, F. Sheppard, and McCreery, played a good

At last we have had a fine Saturday, and the match ground at Hurlingham being in better condition than it has for some weeks past we were treated to a very fine battle between a strong Rugby team and the Inniskilling Dragoons for the Champion Cup. The former was composed of Mr. W. Jones, Captain Renton, Mr. G. Miller, and Mr. W. J. Dryborough (back), whilst the Dragoons played Messrs. H. C. Higgins, G. K. Ansell, Neil Haig, and Major Rimington (back). The soldiers were the first to begin, and had all the best of it until Miller got the ball and scored, after which they returned again to the attack and Ansell made things equal for his side. In the second half Rugby had the best of the game, and after some very fast good play on both sides they won a good match by 5 goals to 2. There was afterwards a match between a strong Hurlingham team consisting of Messrs. Jameson, Freake, Buckmaster, and John Watson (back), and the 10th Hussars, which ended in the victory of the home club by 8 goals to 3.

On the same afternoon our soldiers were also in evidence at Ranelagh, when three club teams were respectively pitted against the Blues, 15th Hussars, and 12th Lancers. The first of these consisted of Mr. Baring, Lord Lovat, Mr. Selwyn, and Captain Fitzgerald, whilst the visitors were made up of Messrs. Marjoribanks, R. Ward, Rose, and Drage (back). The soldiers played a good game throughout, and won a fast-played game by 6 goals to 1. Lord Kensington and Messrs. Spender Clay, E. B. Sheppard, and Barry (back) next, rode on to the ground to encounter the 15th Hussars, represented by Captain Taggart and Messrs. Nugent, Pilkington, and Hambro (back). The Hussars played a really good combined game, and won easily by 9 goals to 2. In the third match Messrs. Menzies and Schrieber, Lord Shrewsbury, and Captain Milner (back) nearly avenged the defeat of the other two Ranelagh quartettes by beating a 12th Lancers team, consisting of Messrs. Wormald, Hobson, Bailey, and Keswick (back). After a close and exciting game they were, however, just defeated by 7 goals to 5. Up to now it looks very much as if the last battles of the Inter-Regimental Tournament will be fought out, as was the case last year, between the Inniskillings, Blues, and 10th Hussars.



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COMING OUT.

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ALL EXPECTANCY.

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fast game throughout, and the Rugby four must be a really good lot to have beaten them as they did. Mr. E. D. Miller's accident was a most untoward event, and the polo season will lose much of its interest if he is kept long out of the saddle; but I sincerely hope that it will not be very long before we see him in the field again.

Whilst these things were taking place at Hurlingham, four sub-teams of the Blues, Messrs. Brassey, Molyneux, Lord Waterford, and Mr. Drage, were being pitted against a club team consisting of Messrs. Hargreaves, P. Nickalls, Lambton, and Lord Shrewsbury (back) at Ranelagh. The soldiers played very irregularly, sometimes being well together and playing a good combined game, and at others being all abroad. The club team were never slow to take advantage of their opportunities, and ultimately won by 10 goals to 4. For the losers Mr. Brassey played well, and made some good runs, especially when riding that beautiful pony, Nellie, who once belonged to Mr. John Watson, and was bought by her present owner at the famous Springhill sale, but he was not always so well backed up as he might have been.

In the next match Messrs. Cavendish, Cookson, Walker, and Schrieber represented the sub-teams of the 1st Life Guards against a Ranelagh team consisting of Messrs. B. Wilson, Baring, Jameson, and F. Belleville. This resulted in a good fast game, and although the home team were leading by 5 goals to 1 at half-time, the soldiers then pulled themselves together, and, playing with the greatest dash, ultimately took the lead, and won an exciting match by 6 goals to 5.

winner, Bay Ronald. He was jumped off in front, made all the running, and came into the straight quite three lengths in front, but Bay Ronald got to him halfway up the hill, and fairly beating him for speed, won easily by a length. This result I am quite unable to understand, except on the supposition that the Walers are a long way behind our horses in class. Here was the admitted best and highest class horse in Australia meeting a mere handicap performer at even weights, and being utterly outpaced by him in the last quarter of a mile. Unless Bay Ronald has suddenly improved into a Derby horse, and a good one at that, Newhaven II. must be a long way behind our best form; if this is not so, Craftsman would have won this year's Derby by a hundred yards.

To go back, however, to the first day, we had an interesting race for the Woodcote Stakes, in which Desmond, who split Amurath and Sister Angela in the Brocklesby Stakes, was made a very warm favourite. He looked to me a trifle big, and in the end he was just beaten by that very nice filly, Fairy Gold, by Bend Or—Lady Masham, by Galliard, who had already won the Stamford Two Year Old Plate at Chester. The principal event of Thursday, the Great Surrey Breeders' Foal Plate, was won by the charming daughter of St. Simon and Hampton Rose, who made such a successful debut at Chester. She is a remarkably clean, wiry, and bloodlike filly, and sure to grow into a good three year old, although a little wanting in size and power now. This race was chosen for the debut of the much-talked-of Boniface, who, however, disappointed me sadly in the paddock, though he ran fairly well and got second. A very useful horse is The Tartar, and right well he ran in the Royal Stakes, though Fosco

RACING NOTES.

SECOND-RATE, and uninteresting as this year's Derby may have been, this falling off was fully atoned for by the character of the rest of the Epsom Summer Meeting. The elements were much more propitious than we had any right to expect after the awful weather we have experienced lately, the crowds have been greater every day rather than less, and the racing has been of a very interesting description, with the exception of the big race, which is so fully described in another part of these columns that I need not say anything more about it here. Certainly a worse-looking lot never went to the post for the great race of the year, and Champ de Mars, who was walking about in the paddock prior to the race—although, not being entered in it, he was waiting for the Epsom Cup—looked like carrying all the lot, except Perthshire. Indeed the Epsom Cup this year excited a great deal more interest than the big event, and opinions were very evenly divided between Winkfield's Pride and the Australian champion, Newhaven II. Personally I always expected the Waler to win, knowing as I do that he is the best horse they have had in Australia for years, whereas Winkfield's Pride, good honest horse as he has shown himself, is only a handicapper after all. So far I was right, though Winkfield's Pride was certainly never himself, and I doubt the Waler ever beating him again at level weights; but the latter in his turn had to strike his colours to the City and Suburban

was two lengths too good for him. Thimble finished third and Bellevin fourth, whilst as Norah Sandys, Diakka, Chasseur, and Northern Farmer were among the unplaced lot, the form must be very useful. The winner, who is by Juggler out of Merry Lassie, is inbred to Stockwell through Lord Lyon, on his sire's side, and Blair Athol both on his sire and dam's. He also gets Touchstone on both sides, so he is a good example of the value of inbreeding to Birdcatcher and Touchstone.

For the Oaks nothing would go down with the public but the One Thousand Guineas winner, Nun Nicer, although Yester Year was fancied by a good many, and her connections were quietly confident about Airs and Graces. Again were the two favourites not on view in the paddock, much to the annoyance of the people who had paid to see them there, and their absence was the more unfortunate in this particular case because Yester Year was unmistakably amiss, and the many men who backed her would have saved their money if they had only seen her first. Airs and Graces looked especially well, and is a really fine filly of the lathy greyhound type, with plenty of

size and scope, and the best of limbs. Mauchline I have always disliked, and I saw nothing in her to make me change my opinion on Friday last, but Simylla is a great, fine mare, and I was much taken with Alt Mark. As for the race, there was only one in it from start to finish, as Bradford, evidently relying on her stamina, took Airs and Graces to the front at once, kept her there all the way, and won in a canter at the finish by a good three lengths.

There is nothing of any great importance to say about Saturday's meeting at Windsor, when Gazetteer, who is useful when he likes to do his best, won the May Handicap, and Mr. Waring's Beenham-bred two year old, by Chittabob—Pardone—took a selling plate. His victory should draw attention to this gentleman's young Chittabobs, who will be sold the week after next at Ascot. This handsome son of Robert the Devil certainly gets very good-looking stock, and a fair number of them have won races, but as I hope to see Mr. Waring's yearlings in a day or two, I need not say more on the subject here.

There will be some interesting racing at Kempton Park to-day, and we shall probably see a good field out for the Coronation Cup. Chon Kina has run badly this year, but he is surely given a chance here with 6st. 3lb., and it must not be forgotten that it was on this course that he last year beat Nun Nicer. Bridgroom and General Peace will be backed if they go to



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THE DERBY: CRITICISING THE CANDIDATES.

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the post, and Prince Barcaldine is not badly handicapped with 8st. 5lb. Knickerbocker and the Hampton Rose filly are both engaged in the Kempton Park Two Year Old Plate, and whichever of the two goes to the post will be made a warm favourite, and probably win.

THOUGHTS ON BREEDING.

THE two principal winners of the past week were of course Airs and Graces and Jeddah. The former of these is by Ayrshire out of Lady Almyne, by Camballo, from Florence Aislebie, by Young Melbourne. At first sight, therefore, it looks as if this filly was an advertisement for inbreeding to Newminster, usually a very dangerous and unsuccessful experiment. On looking closely into her pedigree, however, we find that her two strains of that blood, through Hampton and Camballo, are fortified, in the first case, by the stout blood in The Slave, who was by Melbourne out of Volley, and again by that of Rataplan, whilst Ayrshire's dam represents that best and stoutest of all crosses, Blacklock and Birdcatcher (twice), further strengthened by a strain of Thormanby. On her dam's side, too, Airs and Graces atones for her Newminster strains with those of Blacklock and Melbourne, so that whatever softness she might have inherited from that source is compensated for by a preponderance of good hard blood.

Jeddah is a beautifully bred horse, and very closely inbred to the No. 7 family, both his sire and dam belonging to that celebrated line. His sire, Janissary, who is by Isonomy out of Jannette, is inbred to Birdcatcher (11), through Oxford (12), and Stockwell (3), (twice), crossed on Touchstone (14), and with one strain of Melbourne (7), so that he cannot possibly fail to make a great sire; whilst his dam, Pilgrimage, combines Weatherbit (12), Touchstone (14), Macaroni (14), and Melbourne (7). This is inbreeding to the No. 12 family, which more than any other bears inbreeding to, together with plenty of running blood to suit the sire figures in Janissary's pedigree.

Another winner by Ayrshire was Eventail, who is closely inbred to the No. 12 family, through Voltaire, and Blacklock, with plenty of Touchstone thrown in, and these are the three bloods which always seem to nick well—Blacklock, Birdcatcher, and Touchstone. It is worth noticing, that although Ayrshire did no good so long as he had a big list of mares, now that he has come down to what is comparatively only a few he is scoring a great number of winners. Bay Ronald is also descended from rare old Hampton, whose representatives will probably be quite at the top of the tree at the end of this season. OUTPOST.

THE DERBY.

THAT the Epsom Derby is the greatest race of the year in the whole world goes without saying. That if it often results in an uninteresting affair as that of this year it will soon cease to be so, is equally a fact. That it was an unusually open race is true enough, but this was



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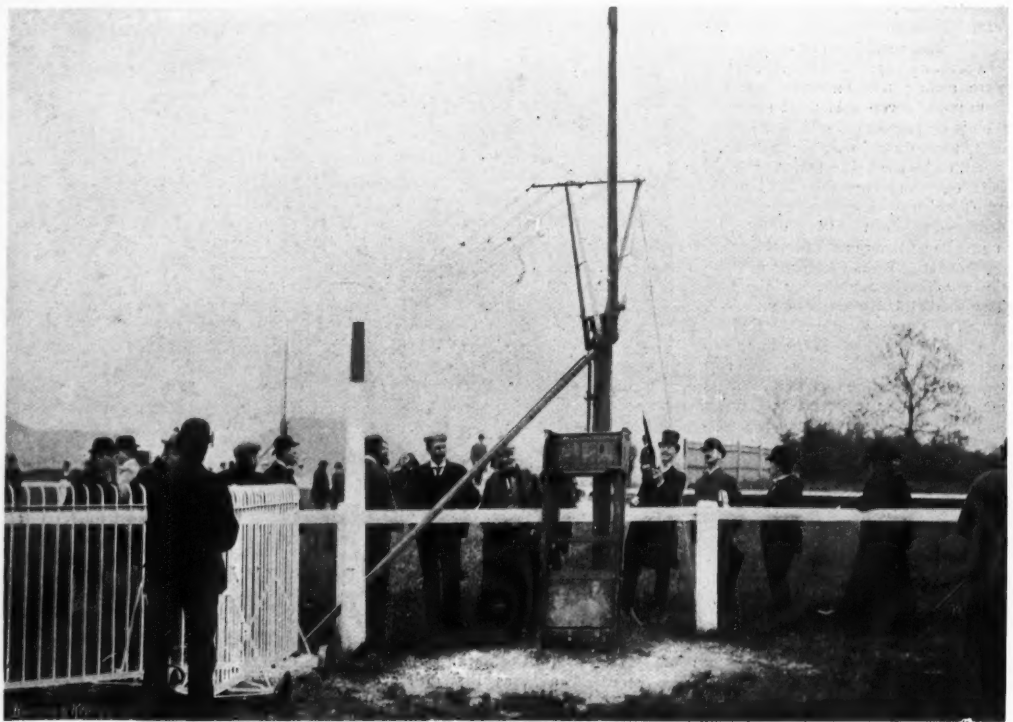
CLIMBING THE HILL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

caused not by there being several good horses between whom it was hard to choose, but by the fact that there was not a single one who had ever proved himself to be in the first-class, or in whom it was possible to have an absolute belief. Disraeli, as the winner of the Two Thousand Guineas, had the most recent winning form to recommend him, and was justly made favourite. Moreover, he is a thoroughly nice horse, and bred all through on the lines of a Derby winner. In the race itself he never once looked dangerous, and he must either have been dead amiss or else be a very bad horse. The Middle Park Plate winner, Dieudonne, who started second favourite, never had a good word from me in these columns—or anywhere else. I have always thought him a leggy, peacocky beast, and, although he can no doubt gallop, I have always doubted his stamina. In the race he got just about where I thought he would—fourth. The winner, however, turned up in the 100 to 1 chance, Jeddah, who had performed in such roguish fashion in the Two Thousand and Newmarket Stakes, that no one could have possibly anticipated his victory. He took it into his head to go, however, on this occasion, and after first Wantage, and then Batt, had looked like winning, he joined issue with the latter at the distance, beat him for speed, and won, somewhat cleverly I thought, by a length. He is a great, fine horse, quite of the Lord Clifden type, but his round fore-joints quite explained his disinclination to extend himself on hard ground, and I doubt his being a really good horse.

Probably there was never such an uninteresting Derby, such a bad field to run for it, or a more unexpected result, whilst we did not even see the two favourites or the ultimate winner in the paddock before the race. I cannot help regarding this as a most reprehensible practice. One of the first essentials in horses intended to improve the breed of our bloodstock is courage, and those whose nerves cannot stand their being looked at ought to suffer for it, and not to be humoured at the expense of their more sober-minded opponents. The curse of our modern race-horses is their cowardice, and surely it is the height of folly to put a premium on that most undesirable quality. In addition to that, it is a most unwarrantable defrauding of the public who have paid to go into the paddock in order to see the horses that are going to run, when they are not all there. If the local stewards refuse to put a stop to this unjustifiable and yearly increasing practice, the sooner the Jockey Club step in and do so the better.

Of the lot that were on view in the paddock, I think there will be very few who will deny the assertion that they were the commonest lot of Derby horses ever seen. A horrid, ramping, leggy beast is Wantage; Archduke II. is nothing



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WHAT IS IT?

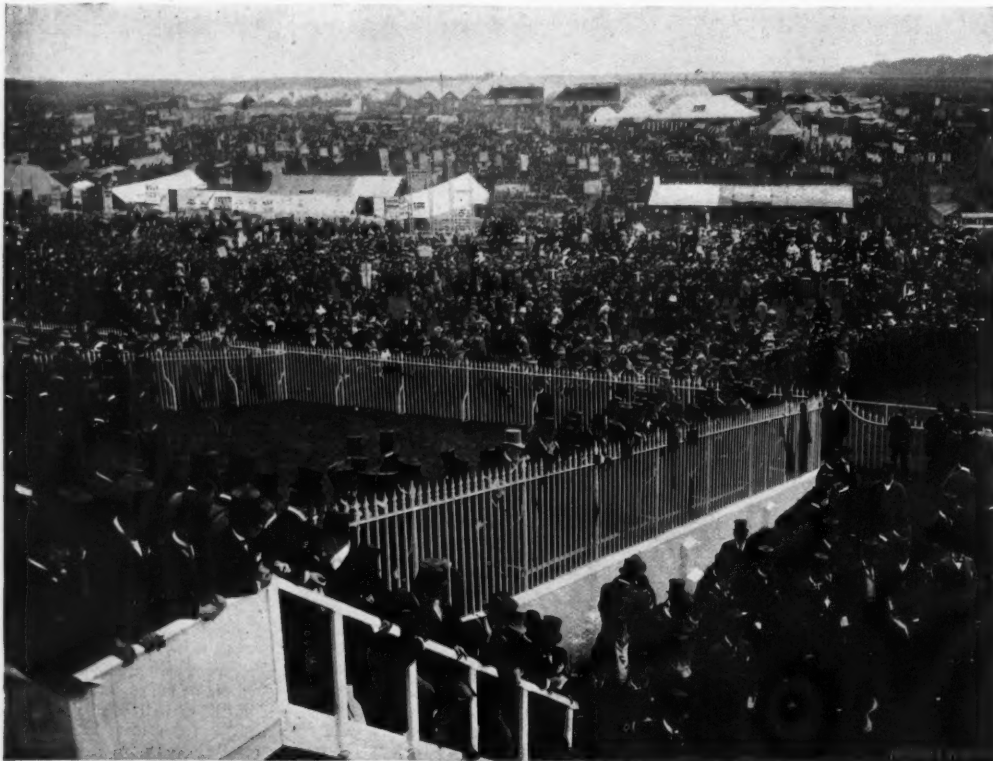
"COUNTRY LIFE."

but a long-backed commoner; Dunlop I did not like; The Wyvern lacks style; Elfin is cobby and terribly short in his shoulders; and Heir Male is too much on the leg. I do not think I ever saw any horse look worse than Hawfinch, who was as bare as a board, dried up to nothing, and almost too weak to walk round the paddock. Otherwise he is a really nice horse, and when he is in a fit state to run he is sure to win a good race, if he has not been for ever ruined by being started in such a state as he was last week. Batt is a nice wiry, varmint-looking colt, though terribly narrow through his middle, and evidently short of class; Pheon is a nicely turned son of Hampton, who takes after his sire in style, though he will probably never be so good a horse; and Bridegroom II. is a lengthy, racing-like sort, though a dreadful thief, like all the stock of his sire, Rayon d'Or; but far and away the best-looking of the whole lot—in fact, the only Derby horse of them all to look at—was Perthshire, who has grown into a really beautiful colt, with size, power, and lovely quality. He is, perhaps, too brilliant a mover ever to stay, and he had no chance of winning over a mile and a-half, but he will run plenty of good races over his own distance in the future.

Elfin was first away when the flag fell, and led up the hill pursued by Calveley trying to make running for his stable companion, Batt, whose best chance was a fast-run race. Coming down the hill Batt went to the front, whilst

Wantage improved his position, and these two were followed round Tattenham Corner by Heir Male and Pheon. A quarter of a mile from home Wantage looked like winning, whilst Disraeli for one brief moment seemed to have a chance. Both these died away again, however, shortly afterwards, and then Batt appeared to be going to win until Jeddah collared him at the distance, and, beating him for speed, went on and won easily by a length. Dunlop was third, and The Wyvern last.

So ended the worst and most uninteresting Derby I have ever seen. How to account for Disraeli's miserable show I am sure I do not know. He looked well enough, but either he cannot have been so, or he must be sadly troubled with the prevailing taint of cowardice. That he is quite so bad as this running makes him out it is impossible to believe. Dieudonne failed to stay, as did Wantage, Heir Male, and Perthshire, and Batt, although he ran his race out stoutly and honestly enough, lacked speed to finish with. The winner is a beautifully-bred horse, his sire, Janissary, who is by Isonomy out of Jannette, being inbred to Birdcatcher through Oxford and Stockwell (twice), whilst his dam, Pilgrimage, represents a combination of Weatherbit, Touchstone, Sweetmeat, and Melbourne. It is worth noticing, too, that both his sire and dam belong to the famous No. 1 family, from which Whalebone sprang, so that his victory is one more proof of the unfailing accuracy of the figures. OUTPOST.

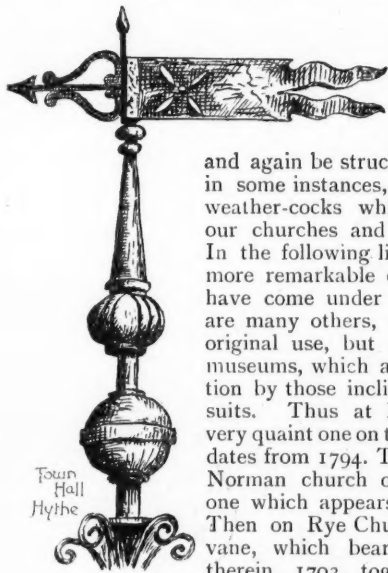


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THE ENCLOSURE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Weather-cocks and Weather Wisdom.



Town Hall
Hythe

AS the traveller is borne along in the train, especially if traversing any old-world district, he cannot but every now

and again be struck at the peculiarity and, in some instances, beauty of design of the weather-cocks which surmount many of our churches and other public buildings. In the following lines we cite a few of the more remarkable of the specimens which have come under our notice; but there are many others, not only fulfilling their original use, but also contained in local museums, which are well worthy of attention by those inclined to antiquarian pursuits. Thus at Hythe will be found a very quaint one on the old Town Hall, which dates from 1794. Then on the small quaint Norman church of Dymchurch there is one which appears to have been repaired. Then on Rye Church there is a handsome vane, which bears its date boldly cut therein, 1703, together with the initials A. R., and the whole is in good preservation.

On Winchelsea Church is another very handsome weather-cock of wrought-iron work, though the plate is of late work, being dated 1868, and bearing the initials W. M. On Cheriton Church is another pretty specimen. At Sandgate there is to be seen a horse and jockey vane, and at Maidstone an elephant wind-plate, the symmetry of which is spoilt by the terminal of the main rod passing out of his shoulders. In the High Street, Tonbridge, is the sportsman weather-cock, which shows a man at one end with gun at shoulder shooting at a bird poised on a branch at the other, while between is a dog watching for the game. On the Town Hall of Rochester is one of the largest and finest of weather-vanes in all England, which represents, in gilt metal, a complete ship in miniature, with all details complete, with twenty-six cannon, spars, blocks, etc. This vessel weighs 7½ cwt., and revolves on glass. On the Medway Brewery at Maidstone is one of a jug and glass, made of copper, while on the Town Hall is a gilt monster, with forked tongue, tail, and wings, and on the observatory is a very fair modern specimen, while in the museum is a quaint example of the goblin order. Many others could have been mentioned, but those we have referred to will serve to show that the subject of weather-cocks is both a wide and an interesting one; and those who take an interest in this branch of metal-working as pursued in these modern days cannot do better than examine the handsome vane, representing a Spanish galleon in full sail, which has been put up on Mr. Astor's offices on the Victoria Embankment.

And naturally, while speaking of weather-cocks, we turn to weather wisdom, which is also a very interesting branch of study. And in this connection we cannot do better than draw upon so excellent an authority as Sir Humphry Davy, who, in his "Salmonia," explains several weather proverbs, signs, and superstitions. Thus, when the clouds are purple-tinted red in the west, it portends fine weather, because the air, when dry, refracts more red or heat-making rays; and as dry air is not

perfectly transparent, they are again reflected in the horizon. A coppery or yellow sunset generally foretells rain; but, as an indication of wet weather approaching, nothing is more certain than a halo round the moon, which is produced by the precipitated water; and the larger

the circle, the nearer the clouds, and consequently the more ready to fall. The old proverb says:—

"A rainbow in the morning is the shepherd's warning;

A rainbow at night is the shepherd's delight."

And this is very often correct, because a rainbow commonly occurs when the clouds containing or depositing the rain are opposite to the sun; now, in the evening the rainbow is in the east, and in the morning in the west; and as our heavy rains in this climate are usually brought by the westerly wind, a rainbow in the west indicates that the bad weather is on the road, by the wind, to

us; whereas the rainbow in the east proves that the rain in these clouds is passing from us.

When swallows fly high fine weather is to be expected or continued; but when they fly low, or close to the ground, rain is almost surely approaching, for swallows follow the flies and gnats, which delight in warm strata of air. Now, as warm air is lighter and usually moister than cold air, when the warm strata of air are high there is less chance of moisture being thrown down from them by their mixture with cold air; but when the warm and moist air is close to the surface, it is almost certain that, as the cold air flows

down into it, a deposition of water will take place. When sea-gulls assemble on the land, very stormy and rainy weather is approaching. The cause of this migration to the land is the security of these birds having food; and they may be observed at this time feeding greedily on the earth-worms and larvæ driven out of the ground by severe floods, whilst the fish on which they prey in fine weather in the sea leave the surface and go deeper in storms. The search after food is the principal cause why animals change their places. The different tribes of the wading birds always migrate when rain is about to take place. The

vulture, upon the same principle, follows armies, and the augury of the ancients was doubtless a good deal founded upon observation of the instincts of birds. There are many superstitions owing to the same source.

For anglers, in spring, it is always voted unlucky to see single magpies; but two may be always regarded as a favourable omen. The reason is that in cold and stormy weather one magpie alone leaves the nest in search of food, the other remaining sitting upon the eggs or the young ones; but two go out together only when the weather is warm and mild, and favourable for fishing. The singular connections of causes and effects make superstition less to be wondered at, particularly amongst the ill-educated; and when two facts, naturally unconnected, have been accidentally coincident, it is not at all singular that this coincidence should have been observed and registered, and that omens of the most absurd kind should be trusted in. In the West of England, somewhat over a century ago, a particular hollow noise on the sea-coast was referred to a goblin called Bucca, and was supposed to foretell a shipwreck. Now the philosopher knows that sound travels much faster than currents in the air; and the sound always foretold the approach of a very heavy storm, which seldom takes place on that coast without a shipwreck on some part of the shore washed by the Atlantic.

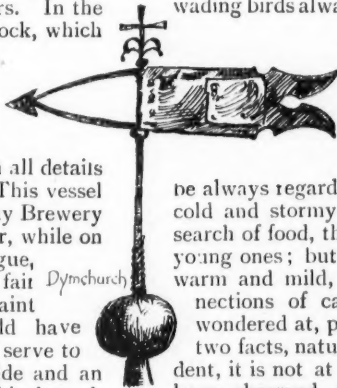
Coming now to folk-lore and weather proverbs, we find a popular one which says "every wind has its weather," and Tusser, in his "Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry," has the following:—

"North winds send hail,
South winds bring rain,
East winds we bewail,
West winds blow amain;
North-east is too cold,
South-east not too warm,
North-west is too bold,
South-west doth no harm."

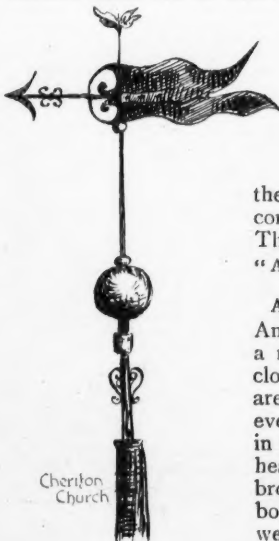
In Suffolk, those versed in weather-lore will tell you that if the wind veers to the north, and remains there during a dry season, there will be no rain so long as the wind remains northerly; but if, on the contrary, the



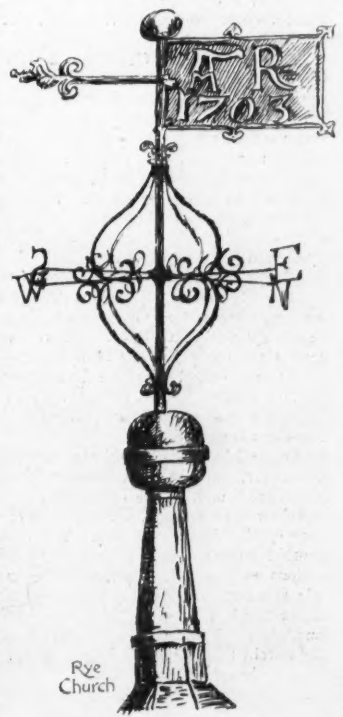
Winchelsea
Church



Dymchurch



Cheriton
Church



Rye
Church

wind veers to the north in a wet season, it will continue to be wet so long as the wind remains in the same quarter. Another belief with many people is that in whatever point the wind stands when the sun crosses the line on March 21st, it will remain principally in that direction for the next three months.

"A northern air
Brings weather fair"

is a common proverb, and a north-west wind is generally popular, as from it is gained the best weather. A Yorkshire proverb advises people to "do business with men when the wind is in the north-west." On the other hand, a north-east wind is just as unpopular, for the old proverb tells us that

"The wind from north-east
Is neither good for man nor beast."

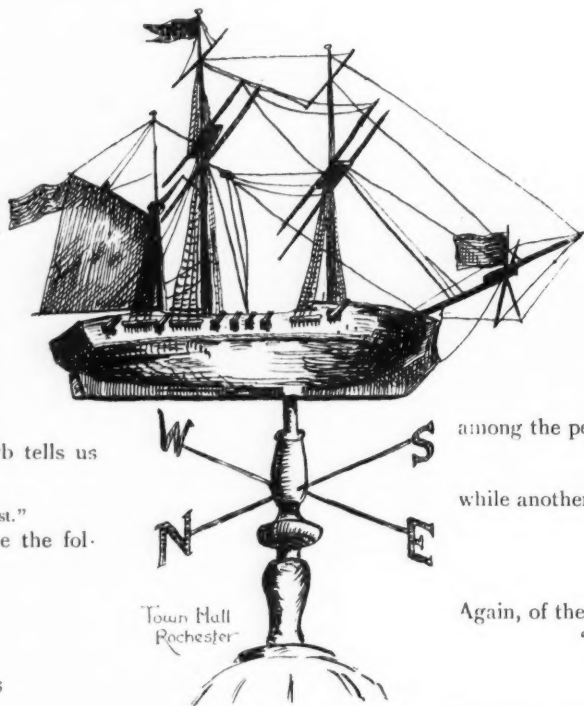
In Scotland and the North they have the following:—

"When the wind's in the north,
Hail comes forth;
When the wind's in the west,
Look for a wat blast;
When the wind's in the south,
The weather will be fresh and good;
When the wind's in the east,
Cauld and snaw comes meist."

Another rhyming jingle prevalent in some parts of the country runs thus:—

"The south wind brings wet weather,
The north wind wet and cold together;
The west wind always brings us rain,
The east wind blows it back again."

The south wind is responsible for much weather wisdom, for we are told that



"When the wind is in the south,
'Tis in the rain's mouth"; while Shakespeare, in "Henry IV.," "As You Like It," and "The Tempest," also alludes to the boisterous character of a southerly wind. In Scotland the peasantry assert that if a south-east wind brings rain, it will last for several days; but for unmitigated unpopularity, the east wind takes the palm. In "The Darker Superstitions of Scotland," Sir John Dalrymple says that, speaking of the north wind, it is most fatal to health.

In Northumberland and the North the following is prevalent among the peasantry:—

"A west wind north about
Never long holds out";

while another runs:—

"East and west,
The sign of a blast;
North and south,
The sign of a drouth."

Again, of the east wind, we find that

"When the wind is in the east,
The fisher likes it least;
When the wind is in the west,
The fisher likes it best."

The west wind is always very welcome, as the following testifies:—

"When the wind is in the west,
Then the weather's always best."

These examples will suffice to prove what an entertaining subject of study weather wisdom is, and the illustrations given herewith will also demonstrate the many interesting weather-cocks to be found by means of a ramble round the town and country.



THE SINGLE JEW'S MALLOW.

A COMMON shrub in cottage gardens throughout the British Isles, as far as our experience goes, is the double Jew's Mallow, or *Kerria japonica* fl.-pl., but the single kind is rarer. We were pleased to see a group of it a few days ago in the Royal Gardens, Kew, at the lower end of the rockwork. The plants made a bold effect, every shoot being studded with small yellow flowers. We have never seen a prettier group, and backed with evergreens its yellow colouring gained in clearness and beauty. Frequently in horticultural periodicals one reads a disparaging note about this single-flowered shrub, because, we suppose, the writer has never seen a good group of it or a plant reasonably cared for.

THE OPHRYS, OR BEE AND FLY ORCHIDS.

These dainty flowers are becoming rarer in England as the tourist and tripper seek out the wilder retreats and destroy their flower life. We may point out, however, that not ten plants in a hundred lifted from the chalky bank, or wherever the Orchids may be growing, live for any length of time. The Ophrys in particular are very hard to satisfy. Where there is a good rock garden then a position may be allotted them, choosing a rather dry spot, the soil loam with which limestone is freely mixed. Let some creeping plant cover the surface to retain moisture. The Bee Orchid, with its beautifully-coloured bee-like flowers, is worth coaxing into vigorous growth, and an interesting companion to it is the Fly Orchid (*O. muscifera*).

THE LILACS.

Happily for English gardens the flowering trees and shrubs are more plentiful now than a few years ago, and gardeners and others are getting better acquainted with the more beautiful varieties. This is true especially of the Lilacs, a lovely group of flowering shrubs, and of recent years varieties of fine colour have been added to the family. Beyond the common Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*), the following may be grown:—Persian Lilac (*S. persica*), a pretty dwarf species with delicate lilac-coloured flowers; there is a cut-leaved form of it named *laciniata*. *S. josikaea* is very distinct, its flowers of a mauve shade, and there is the Rouen or Chinese Lilac (*S. chinensis*), also called *S. rothomagensis* and *S. dubia*. It is, however, amongst the varieties of the common Lilac that the most beautiful colours are found. The ordinary Lilac of gardens is a shrub of much charm, the colour soft and pure, without trace of that purplish shade so conspicuous in many of the darker varieties. The common white Lilac is eclipsed by such beautiful forms as *Marie Legray* and *grandiflora*. Of double Lilacs none is so precious as *Lemoinei* fl.-pl., the clusters bold and the individual flowers like little rosettes. *Souvenir de Louis Stath* is the best in colour of the group, but we care less even for this than the refined lilac tint of the common kind so abundant in shrubberies. *Charles X.* is the best known of the purples, and forces well, the variety used so much in France for bringing early into flower being *Rubra de Marly*. Lilac forces well, and the fragrant clusters in late winter have peculiar fascination. A few shoots in some simple vase form a dainty decoration.

THE SUMMER GARDEN.

All summer plants should be in their places at this time, as fear of frost is now past. We always counsel prudence in summer bedding. One must not be tempted by the warmth of mid-May to put out the tender plants, as too often a sharp frost occurs towards the end of the last spring month which wrecks plants, early vegetables, and everything tender. The Agapanthuses should now be in the verandah or upon the terrace with those fine tub plants, the Fuchsia, Sweet Verbena, scented-leaved Pelargonium, Plumbago, and Datura or Brugmansia. During the summer the tub plants will require close attention as regards watering, as the soil quickly gets dry. A little liquid manure occasionally will be helpful. The garden is now approaching its brightest period, and to prolong the flowering time as much as possible never forget the golden rule to pick off faded flowers to prevent seed forming. It is when a plant is permitted to ripen seed and bear flowers at the same time that it collapses, this applying to tufted Pansies, Sweet Peas, or Antirrhinums, as well as to the most familiar annuals. A slight stirring up of the surface soil is very helpful towards maintaining vigorous growth.

CELOGYNE CRISTATA AND ITS VARIETIES.

If anyone required only one Orchid, we think our selection would be this beautiful species, which bears an abundance of pure white flower racemes during the winter months. It is one of the most popular Orchids in cultivation, and is fortunately not difficult to grow. A great point is to thoroughly drain the pots, because during the season of growth plenty of water is necessary, and it is impossible to carry this away unless crocks are freely used. Use for soil good fibrous peat and live sphagnum moss with some silver sand added. Raise the plant slightly above the rim of the pot or pan, whichever be used, and make the soil firm. The object of thus raising the soil is to throw off superfluous moisture, which will certainly rot the roots if allowed to accumulate about them. Even during the resting period sufficient water must be given to prevent the pseudo-



C. Metcalfe

A PURE WHITE-FLOWERED ORCHID.

C. Metcalfe

bulbs shrivelling, at which time keep the plant cooler. During the summer a Cattleya house is most suitable, or if there is no such structure in the garden, a very warm greenhouse or stove. Whilst the flowers are in beauty, this Orchid may be used in the drawing-room, to be returned again at once to the plant-house when the flowering time is over. There are several varieties, differing chiefly in the size of the flowers. Hence maxima is larger in this respect than the type, whilst the variety known as the Chatsworth possesses unusually stout segments. In Lemoniana the conspicuous colouring on the lip is of a soft lemon-yellow shade. Large specimens of *C. cristata* bear a remarkable number of the spotless white flower spikes.

THE SANDWORTS.

The Sandworts or Arenarias form a large family, but few kinds are grown in

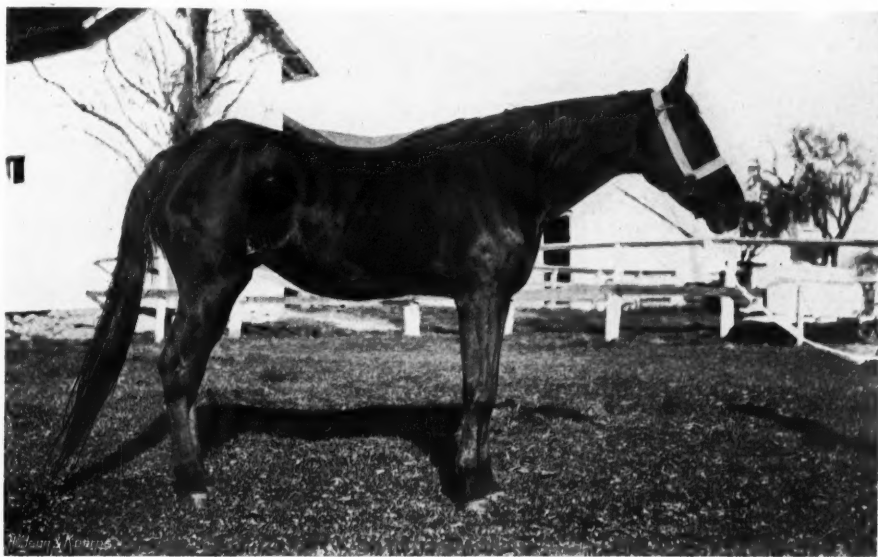
gardens, the chief of these being the little mossy *A. laevarica* and *A. montana*. The Balearic Sandwort, by which name the former is generally known, is a useful plant; it covers the facing of the stones in the rock garden with delightful verdure, relieved during the summer months with a thousand starry white flowers, and it may be used also to cover walls where Aubrietias, Pansies, Fumitories, Toadflax, and other dainty things can establish themselves. The Arenaria always grows most freely in the cooler parts, which is natural, as the growth surfaces the stone. The mountain Sandwort (*A. montana*) has much larger flowers, of purest white. It is indeed altogether bolder, and in warm soils very hardy. Neither kind cares for severe winters, especially when the soil is cold and damp.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We gladly help readers desirous of information about gardening in any of its branches.



UNDER the above title could be written an article practically unlimited as to length, for the champions are numerous, from the champion yearling to the all-age champion, from the champion stallion to the mare and gelding. Their records on the turf make brilliant reading, and the pages of the Year Book, the record of all trotting and pacing performances, glow with their deeds on the track. But no attempt will be made to list the performance or history of every aspirant to championship honours, and mention will be made only of those whose claims are conceded and whose memory dwells in the hearts of the American nation, for the name of the champion is a household word for the time being, such is the love accorded the trotter. It was in 1845 that Lady Suffolk set the world agog by trotting in 2.29½, and since then we have seen many, many champions. She held the crown for four years, and now, fifty-two years later, we find the mark set at 2.03¾, and the laurel wreath that once decorated the grey daughter of Engineer 2nd and adorning the brow of Alix, daughter of Patronage.

Flora Temple was the first trotter to beat 2.20, and not until 1859 did she succeed in accomplishing this feat. She was the greatest race-mare of her time, and during her career she trotted in 103 recorded races and many that are not. She was a

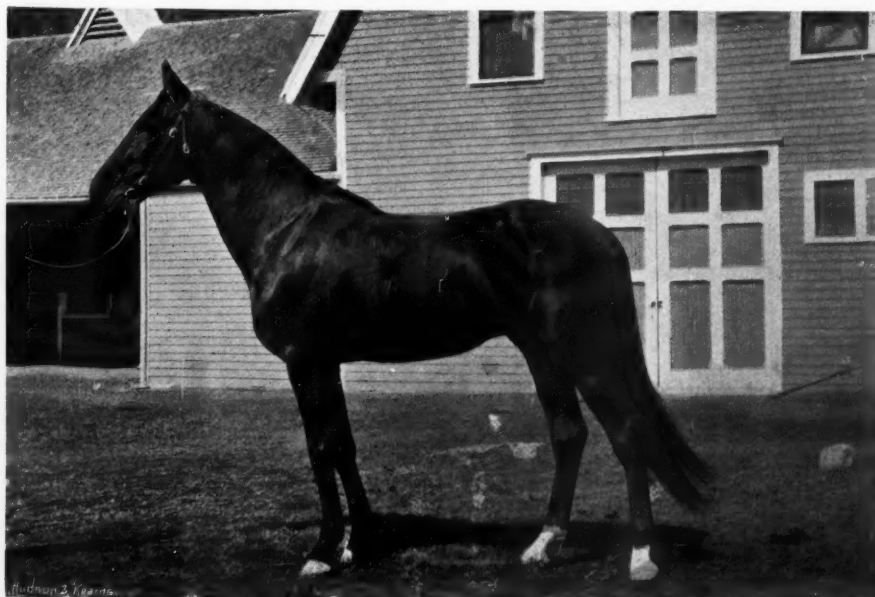


MAUD S.

small bay mare, with docked tail, and for eleven years she was the acknowledged queen. She was in many respects one of the most remarkable animals America ever produced. Her sire, One-Eyed Kentucky Hunter, was a son of Kentucky Hunter, he by Young Highlander, son of imported Brown Highlander, his dam being by Sir Henry. The dam of Flora Temple was Madam Temple, a daughter of a spotted Arabian horse, but back of this her pedigree is unknown.

Following in the hoof-prints of Flora Temple came that most wonderful horse, Dexter. Dexter was a son of the mighty Hambletonian, his dam a daughter of American Star; the dam of American Star was by Sir Henry, grandam by imported Messenger. The brilliant performances of Dexter are still a matter of common talk, and though it is thirty years since his retirement his name is still in daily use, and not a schoolboy in the land but knows his mighty name. He raced for three years only, but those three years shine with the brilliancy of his performances; and when, on August 14th, 1867, he trotted over the Buffalo track in 2.17½, and was purchased by Robert Bonner for 30,000 dol., his racing career came to a most brilliant end. He was the horse of the century.

Goldsmith Maid was next inscribed on the championship roll, and her mark of 2.14, made in her seventeenth year and repeated in her nineteenth year, is to-day the grandest



ARION.



SUNOL.



FANTASY.



ALIX.

performance for a trotter of that advanced age. During her career she won more heats and more money than any trotter that ever lived, over a quarter of a million of dollars being credited to her. She was a daughter of Alexander's Abdallah, son of the great Hambletonian, and a direct descendant of imported Messenger on both paternal and maternal side.

Then in the order named came those good horses, Rarus, who trotted in 2.13 $\frac{3}{4}$; St. Julien, 2.11 $\frac{1}{4}$; and then "The Queen of the Turf," Maud S., 2.08 $\frac{3}{4}$. MAUD S. was a chestnut filly, foaled March 28th, 1874. She was bred by the celebrated Woodburn Farm, at Lexington, Kentucky, the centre of the horse universe. She was a daughter of Harold, he by Hambletonian 10. Her dam, Miss Russell, was a daughter of Pilot Jr., son of a Canadian horse of unknown breeding. The dam of Miss Russell was a daughter of Boston, son of Timoleon. As a yearling Maud S. was sold for 260dol. She was placed in the stable of a young trainer named Bair, and he drove her a mile in her three year old form in 2.17 $\frac{1}{2}$ —an unprecedented performance. She was then sold to Mr. Vanderbilt for 21,000dol., and he used her for a road mare for some time. In 1880 she was again trained by Bair and given a record of 2.11 $\frac{3}{4}$, which record was reduced to 2.10 $\frac{1}{4}$ in 1881. In 1884 Jay Eye See, a son of Dictator, brother of the once champion Dexter, trotted a mile in 2.10, and the following day Maud S. was sent to regain her lost crown, and won it by trotting in 2.09 $\frac{3}{4}$. That autumn she made its possession still more secure by trotting in 2.09 $\frac{1}{4}$. She was then sold to Robert Bonner for 40,000dol., and in 1885 she made her last public appearance, and lowered the mark to 2.08 $\frac{3}{4}$. This to-day is the fastest mile ever trotted to high wheel sulky over a regulation track. Each year the mark made by Maud S. was shot at by many trotters, but it was not reached until SUNOL, a daughter of Electioneer, trotted in 2.08 $\frac{1}{4}$ in 1891, six years later. This mare was then five years old, and had been a most brilliant colt trotter. She held, at various times, the record for two year olds, three year olds, four year olds, and finally the all-age record. She, too, was purchased by Robert Bonner, for 41,000dol., and is now a member of his stable. Sunol's dam was Waxana, by General Benton, grandam Waxy, by Lexington.

Nancy Hanks, "Our Nancy," was the next in line of successions. She lowered the record to 2.07 $\frac{1}{4}$, then to 2.05 $\frac{1}{4}$, and finally to 2.04 in 1892. This was thought to be a record that would stand for years. Nancy Hanks was, like the previous champions, a grand-daughter of old Hambletonian through the male line, her dam being a daughter of Dictator, the brother of Dexter, another son of Hambletonian. Following Nancy Hanks came the present champion, Alix, 2.03 $\frac{3}{4}$, a daughter of Patronage. ALIX was a most brilliant race-mare, and it did not surprise her admirers when she captured the crown. Her sire Patronage was a son of Pancoast, he by Woodford Mambrino. Alix traces to Hambletonian through both male and female lines, and it will thus be seen that every champion since the time of Flora Temple carried the blood of the Hero of Chester.

Many other champions are recorded in the Trotting Register. Among the four year olds we find many famous names, Sunol, Alix, and Jay Eye See having held the record for a time. Directum, the champion stallion, made his mark of 2.05 $\frac{1}{4}$ as a four year old, while FANTASY, 2.06, is fastest of the four year old fillies. Sunol was a sensational two year old, and then gave way to her famous half-brother ARION. This fellow trotted in 2.10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in his two year old form—a record as yet unequalled, and

probably one that will stand the assaults of time more than any record standing. Arion was sold by his breeder, Governor Stanford, to J. Malcolm Forbes, of Boston, for 125,000dol., the highest price ever paid for a trotter, and next to Ormonde the highest ever paid for a horse.

In the yearling championship list we find five that have beaten 2.30, the record being held by Adbell, 2.23, a grandson of Electioneer, the greatest sire of fast youngsters that ever lived.

Undoubtedly most interesting reading could be made by giving the performances of the champion stallions; and though a stallion never held the record, many fast miles, many hot races, and hard fights have been witnessed between them. From Ethan Allen down the line came George M. Patchen, the mighty George Wilkes, the great Smuggler, to Axtell, Nelson, Allerton, Palo Alto to Directum, 2.05½, the fastest stallion in America, the home of the trotter.

THRESHING WITH THE FLAIL.

MANY ancient and honoured branches of the husbandman's craft are now almost as obsolete as the old rustic names clinging to parts of cities. No one now remembers the King's wind-mill on Ludgate Hill, and the origin of the name of Cornhill, where the Bishops of London had a threshing floor, and a "seigniorial oven," where they obliged their tenants to bake their bread, is only kept alive on the covers of the *Cornhill Magazine*. This design, though less widely known than Doyle's famous outer page for *Punch*, is one of the oldest, and certainly among the most pleasing, designs of its class, and, by a natural reference to the title, shows a country lad in the old costume of loose shirt, breeches, and hose, engaged in those "mysteries of Ceres" which have been honoured from all time—ploughing, sowing, reaping, and threshing his corn.

Of these four graceful acts, so gracefully drawn, three are almost entirely obsolete. The sower no longer "sows the seed" as the Cornhill boy is sowing it; he no longer stoops and reaps the corn with the sickle, as he stoops to reap it; and almost forgotten is the art of threshing with the flail.

To do so well and skilfully is no easy work, and needs more practice than falls to the lot of the modern husbandman; but it lingered on for years as a common custom among the men after it had become disused by the masters. For most of the labourers had their own dearly loved little patch of "allotment wheat"; and to this had to be added all their wives' and children's "gleaning corn." To thresh this in company on a Saturday night was a



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favourite and much-prized social function among the Suffolk labouring men. They would borrow a barn in the village for the occasion, and each would bring his own lot of sheaves, and the big bundles of the wives' gleaning corn. Lanterns were hung up to light the work, the women would come in with the girls, a sheet of old rick canvas was spread on the floor, the bands of the sheaves cut, and the corn in the ear laid on the sheet. Three or four men would then take off their coats, roll up their sleeves, and giving their flails a twist, would swing them and bring them down in rapid strokes, following like a peal of

bells. An awkward young fellow would hit his own head in trying to swing the flail, and be well chaffed as he rubbed his damaged skull; but generally the work was well and neatly done. A good flailsman could lay the flail top, fastened by a loop of white sheepskin to the pole, across a single head of corn, as neatly as a fisherman will throw a fly over a rising trout. As soon as the first man's corn was threshed, it was roughly winnowed by fanning it with a broad rush-woven corn scoop, and then put into the winnowing machine, whose rushing fans and shifting shuttles made a suitable accompaniment to the dingdong strokes of the flails. Each man's total of corn was matter for guessing and comment, and plenty of pots of beer were brought round from the ale house for drinking during this process of realising the labourers' little harvest. On the farms themselves the threshing on the



H. W. Taunt.

FLAIL UP.

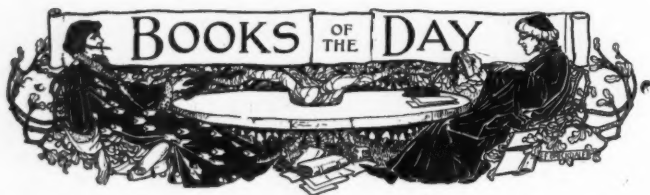
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barn threshing floor was about the most enjoyable of the winter duties of the men. It was done in snow time, or on wet days, and gave warmth and exercise in good dry shelter. It is worth noting that our word "barn" really means a threshing floor, and not a store-house. In low German, notably Dutch, it means any smooth flat place. The flat platform of grass on which the Dutch bird-catchers spread their nets in the sand-hills is a "vinkie baarn," or flat place for catching finches, and the place where the troops exercise at The Hague is the marli-baarn (? military barn). In the East these threshing floors were out of doors, and needed no roof. The corn was threshed originally by driving the oxen over it: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox which treadeth out the corn." But national proverbs and prohibitions originate usually very early in a nation's history. This was the simple and ancient method of the East, and of the Homeric age when

"thick bestrewn lay Ceres' golden floor,
Where round and round, with never wearied pain,
The trampling steers break out th' unnumbered grain."

But later, heavy logs were drawn over the corn by the oxen, and sometimes sledges, fitted with rollers. In either case a considerable space of level ground was needed, which accounts for David's purchase of the "threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite" on which to build his altar. The "threshing instruments" were also offered to make the first fire with.

C. J. CORNISH.



THERE are many writers of fiction, many even who are quite well known, whom it would be proper to congratulate if they had written "Kronstadt" (Cassell and Co.). But the author of the book happens to be that very clever person Mr. Max Pemberton, and it would be an insult to congratulate him upon his achievement, for he is capable of much better things than this impossible story. One can tell it in a very few words. General Stefanovitch, the Deputy Governor of the great fortress, had an English governess named Marian for his daughters, and she was very beautiful. Also she was a spy in the pay of the British Admiralty. Captain Paul Zassulic, an officer under the General's command, fell in love with the lovely governess and, quite innocently, gave her opportunities of acquiring knowledge enough to transmit a correct map of the fortifications to the British Admiralty. She was found out, of course, and they immured her in Fort Peter; also they threatened her with the knout. Then Zassulic, having procured an order for her removal to a more tolerable dungeon, got her on to his steam-yacht, ran away with her from the whole Baltic Fleet, and had all sorts of narrow escapes. She, feeling she had disgraced her lover, slipped away in an open boat and landed on a lepers' island. A large leper rescued her from a rabble of other lepers and rowed out to sea with her in the original yacht's dingey. He wanted to kiss her, and she cried aloud for Paul. She heard English voices—Paul had an English crew—and jumped into the sea and swam; "a boat shot out of the loom of the darkness," she was saved. They got to England at last, where myrmidons of Russia soon got Paul—he was simple enough to have been called Simon—into their clutches and imprisoned him in an upper room. Something of the same kind was done at the Chinese Embassy not long ago. Then Prince Tolma, a wealthy and influential relative of Paul's, managed to set all things right in rather a dramatic way. He conducted Marian to the house where Paul was imprisoned. She there proved to the Russian officials that she could draw a perfect plan of Fort Constantine from memory without the assistance of Paul. Thereupon the officials determined to make her a Russian out and out, to marry her to Paul on the spot, and to allow the lovers to live happily ever after. Now with all respect to Mr. Pemberton, I venture to call this a highly improbable story and too impossible to be artistic in quality. But that is the end of disparagement, for the manner of the writing is excellent. The descriptions of scenes are superb; there is great wealth of passages instinct with true pathos; Marian's conversations are full of brilliant wit. Most striking scene of all, perhaps, is that of the examination of Marian in the gloomy room of the fort which is her prison. Paul, who had seen her prying into the General's papers and had not denounced her, had himself been seen at the same time although he knew it not. She is evasive, dignified, a picture of childish agony. Paul is



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called upon to give testimony. With a superhuman effort he tells the truth; she swoons. The examination over, "Old Bonzo"—a rather pleasing caricature of the Russian official—"lingered a moment to whisper a word in Paul's ear. 'There were two prisoners this morning, my son,' he said, with a kindly pat of his great hand, 'two prisoners, but one is acquitted.' 'You mean my Colonel —' 'That the woman was watched last night, and that the words you have just spoken saved your life.' He lurched from the room to join his chief, but Paul remained long standing by the table where the damning words were spoken. 'She will never believe,' he thought. 'I have lost her love. God help me!'" The illustrations are the best that I have seen in any novel for many a long day, admirably conceived, and aptly fitted to the narrative. They are the work of that intellectual artist and most agreeable of gentlemen, Amedée Forestier.

Each fresh volume from Mr. Stockton's fertile pen that one takes up impresses one anew with admiration of his wonderful versatility. Last time his pages coruscated with imaginary inventions worthy of Jules Verne himself; now in "The Girl at Cobhurst" (Cassell) he is full of the delightful simplicity of American country life. It is needless to indicate the sequence of the pleasant artless story. Suffice it to say that the characters are one and all delightful, from Miss Panney, the quaint matchmaking spinster of many years, to La Fleur, the artistic cook. The dignity of La Fleur, her pride in her art, her obvious faith in the essential necessity of good cooking, are delicious. "I have a high opinion of Dr. Tolbridge. I know what he is and what he needs. I often sit up late at night, thinking of things that will be good for him, and which he will like. We all work here. Every one of the household is industrious, but the doctor and I are the only ones who must work with our brains. The others simply work with their bodies and hands." The scene in the kitchen between Molly Tooney and La Fleur is full of humour; indeed humour, of the most delicate description, and clever, dainty, pretty girls are the keynotes of a very refreshing and readable volume.

The good esteem in which the work of Mr. Horace G. Hutchinson is held by COUNTRY LIFE is indicated by the number of the productions of his graceful and good-humoured pen which appear in these columns. The publication of his new book, "The Golfing Pilgrim" (Methuen), affords a welcome opportunity of pointing out wherein his merits principally consist. The first of them is that he plays golf with his eyes open. There are men who can be terribly tedious in their discourse upon the royal and ancient game, but he is not one of them. He carries one away to the links with him. He is not ever telling us of long drives and "stimies," or filling pages with catalogues of clubs with horrible names. He notes the little fleecy clouds floating up over the Exmoor hills, the foam of the breakers, the gulls, the wild thyme, the hum of the bees and the purposeful line of the travelling bee, the dalliance of the blue butterflies, and a thousand things besides. He observes with delight all things living and all things beautiful. He is also a great golfer, who understands all the ins and outs of the game which try the patience of philosophers. Above all things he is always bright, and his little ironies are full of playful good humour. "Story? God bless you!" he has none to tell, but he chatters away gaily, like the interesting, bright, observant gentleman that he is.

It is good that Mr. A. Trevor Battye has given us in a "Northern Highway of the Tsar" (Constable) a sequel to "Ice-bound on Ko'gnev." The book is a pleasant account of his journey through the high northern forests of Russia, and it makes useful as well as in interesting reading. For Mr. Battye is not what I venture to call a mere traveller who revels in hard facts. He is a very pleasant-spoken man who grows attached to his friends, the Samoyeds, and shares their life; he likes everybody and is liked in return; he makes little or no fuss about hardships endured. Above all things, he is a competent observer of animated nature, and in his simple, unaffected way, he can place a very clear and pretty picture before the reader. He writes so pleasantly that one begins to envy him his travels; but when you come to hard facts, life in a choom, with several Samoyeds and children and a calf reindeer for bedfellows, with the rain settling in puddles under you, and no air to speak of, with rye bread made up with putrid fish for food, must be poor fun at the time. But things of this sort may be worth doing for the pleasure of looking back at them in after days.



SENSE OF SMELL IN FISHES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Reading in your paper the question asked by "Vermicelli" as to fish having the sense of smell, permit me to say a few words on the subject. I think undoubtedly that they have the sense, as the following will show. Poachers when using salmon roe (I am glad to see that the public selling of this has led to two or three convictions lately), more especially paste made from the roe, hardly ever move when a spot has been fixed for the night, as they seem to take it for granted that fish within a reasonable distance will be attracted by the smell of the roe; and judging from the contents of the poachers' baskets that have been caught, their judgment is not misapplied.—ROSEMOUNT.

TROUT AND PERCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think it may interest some of your readers to hear of a curious experience that occurred to me lately while fishing a small private lake for trout. The trout were Loch Levens that had been turned in as two year olds, and were now about one pound and a-half in average weight. In the lake there were also numbers of small perch, about four to the pound. For three days I had fished this lake intermittently with indifferent luck with the trout, but with never a perch taking the slightest interest in my flies. Then on an evening I hooked a trout. His first jump out of the water showed me that he was about the usual one and a-half pound size. As he became quieter I was able to see that he was foul-hooked, and soon was able to make out that he was hooked by the drop fly in the dorsal fin. Naturally I had little power over him, and could only hope that he might be kind enough to come sufficiently near to give me a chance with the landing-net. The drop fly was a small black thing that looked as if it were meant for an imitation of a cross between a black gnat and a housefly, the tail fly was a March Brown. Presently as my fish went swimming gaily about I noticed a perch in close attendance on him. At first I thought that the perch was only watching him, in curiosity about his singular antics; but soon I perceived to my surprise, and rather to my disgust (for it only complicated the already difficult position), that this wretched perch had taken the tail fly and was being towed about in company with the trout. I played both for about a quarter of an hour, never gaining any real mastery over the trout, though he was beginning to show signs of distress, when the double strain of myself at one end and the perch at the other tore the drop hook away from its hold in the dorsal fin, and away the trout sailed merrily, leaving me to console myself by hauling in the miserable perch. It was rather a curious little comedy, but what was by far the most remarkable feature of it was that this perch, at this moment, should have taken the March Brown, and that no other perch at any other moment of my three days' fishing should ever have looked at the same fly so often offered. If it was merely coincidence it was indeed extraordinary; but I am inclined to think that it was really something more—that the wonderful agitation of the March Brown, owing to the struggles of the trout, made it especially attractive to the perch, or that the trout's splashes gave the imitation a chance of passing for the original such as it did not have before the troubling of the pool. In any case it was a curious experience, and as such perhaps worthy of record. I may add, at the risk of provoking the smile that is always in waiting for a "fish story," that this is in every detail absolutely true.—H. GORDON.

A SUMMER GARDEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am entering about the beginning of June into possession of a large and ancient garden in Berkshire. It is in fairly clean condition, is well stocked with fruit trees, and has a few choice old-fashioned perennials, but there is a great deal of vacant space. Pray advise me how to make a show.—BARKS.

[We daresay many readers of COUNTRY LIFE are placed in a similar position to our correspondent, who has taken a house for the summer months, to find that the old-world garden requires brightening with summer flowers. Of course this is not the time to plant tree, hardy perennial, or annual. It is too late, but there is no want of beautiful summer plants to give colour during the required time without resorting to bedders of the bizarre type. Tuberous begonias are useful. They are rich and varied in colour, and may be purchased at cheap rates according to the colour; that is, if one wants a batch of seedlings with scarlet flowers they may be obtained, also of pure white, orange, orange-scarlet, and so forth. A bed of the white variety edged with blue lobelia is pretty. Then, again, one may make good use of the fuchsia—a free, graceful flower; and if one can get some old plants they will give interest and beauty to the garden until quite the autumn. A group of these on the lawn is picturesque, sinking the pots just below the turf. In the same way may be used the beautiful agapanthus, or blue African lily, and the soft blue Plumbago capensis. A small bed of the last-mentioned is very pretty and keeps flowering throughout the summer. But, of course, these fine tub plants must be purchased, which is a rather expensive item in the gardening account of the year. Where, however, expense is no object, to this list may be added the sweet verbena (Aloysia citriodora), myrtle, and the sweet scented-leaved Cape pelargoniums. Unfortunately it is too late to raise seeds of anything for the present season's display, so one must rely upon full-grown plants. Include the pretty blue-flowered Salvia patens, a delightful colour, and useful in indoor decorations, the white and yellow marguerites, ageratums, the little blue Agasthea coelestis, and the Brugmansia or Datura, which should be used in a similar way to the plumbago. Our correspondent can make bold effects with the dahlias, especially the splendid cactus varieties, of which there is now an endless selection from white to deepest crimson. Use also some of the other classes, singles and pompons, which will give plenty of flowers for the house in August. Petunias, pentstemons, verbenas, and pansies may be planted, but the pansies will require considerable attention to get them established. Sunflowers may be planted, and any very strong growing annual in bed, or even sweet peas if from pots or transplanted,

but we are afraid the results will not be satisfactory if the weather should be very hot. Make good use of castor-oil and other tropical plants, not forgetting the sweet-scented tobacco (Nicotiana affinis), which quickly flowers and keeps up a succession until the time of frosts. Its ivory-white flowers are agreeably sweet. Perhaps some reader of COUNTRY LIFE who has been placed in a similar position to our correspondent and dealt satisfactorily with a garden at this late period would give advice too.—ED.]

MARECHAL NIEL ROSES OF POOR COLOUR.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have a Maréchal Niel rose growing and blooming freely in a cool greenhouse; the flowers are of a pale straw colour instead of a deep rich yellow. Will you be so good as to tell me the reason and the mode of treatment to remedy this defect—if I may call it such?—JAMES PRESTON.

[This is an interesting question, and we do not think anyone has determined the reason why some flowers should be richer or paler than others. Perhaps it may be due to mere variety, as varieties differ greatly in shade, even when the plants may be growing under the same conditions. Soil and climate certainly influence colour, and we have frequently noticed how rich in colour are the flowers upon plants near the sea. From our experience pure loam gives the best results, and the most satisfactory plants are those budded upon standard briers. We may also attribute poor colouring to indifferent cultivation and selection of shoots for propagating. There are two very common errors in the cultivation of this rose. One is placing the trellis so close to the glass that the shoots cannot develop properly, and another is not assisting the plants with liquid manure. Let the wires for training the roses upon be quite fifteen inches from the glass, and thin out the shoots judiciously to prevent a thicket of wood. We hope your rose is not cankered in any way, a deadly foe to this variety in particular.—ED.]

WIREWORMS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—My young experience has proved the most complete havoc you can play among these pests and checkmate their movements is a good liberal dressing of rape dust. It is a sort of cruel stimulant; they eat so much they die of indigestion; you will find them dead on the land double their usual girth. Rape dust is a good manure to the land, will drive away "fly," and is used very much in the hop gardens of Kent.—EDWARD R. BURTT.

MAGPIE AND DOG.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I see a correspondent writing to COUNTRY LIFE and singing the praises of a parrot as an imitator of the human voice. No doubt the parrot is a fairly accurate imitator, and in the case mentioned by your correspondent of its imposing on a dog's acute hearing, there is no question that it must have been unusually so, but in general I have long maintained that the corvine birds, and the magpie in particular, are more faithful copyists of the *vox humana* than any of the family of parrots. And in proof of what I say I will adduce an instance that happened under my own observation of a magpie imitating to the utmost perfection not only the human, but also the canine voice, and the sounds of the two mingled in an inharmonious concert, with the further result of obtaining the conviction of a servant for cruelty to animals. There was a certain dog and there was a certain keeper, to adopt the style of some fabulists, and it was shrewdly suspected from the crouching demeanour of the dog that the keeper treated it with brutality. The suspicion, however, could never be converted into certainty, for the keeper would always be cunningly kind to the dog when the master was by, attributing its crouching to a nervous disposition, and so on. But one day, while passing by this keeper's cottage, the master chanced to pause to listen to the chattering of a certain magpie in a cage hanging by the entrance. At first the bird conversed to itself on indifferent topics only, but after a while it began to call, in a voice of much indignation, "Danger! Danger!" which was the name of the spaniel aforesaid. "Danger, come here; come here!" it went on. Finally, there was no doubt that Danger had come, for forthwith there arose a chorus of canine yelpings and expostulations, indicating that poor Danger was receiving a severe beating. And since the human voice was like that of the keeper, the master could scarcely believe that the dog was not actually receiving chastisement within the cottage; but close attention showed that the whole was due to the magpie's powers of mimicry. And since, for it to have learned this lesson so perfectly, it must have certainly conned it many times, the master deemed the case sufficiently proved against the guilty keeper, and took the first opportunity of giving him notice. This, as the eminent Mr. Barlow would have said, is the story of the brutal keeper and the intelligent magpie.—PHILOCORVUS.



MONDAY: What is the use of having a very dear friend if she persists in leaving London and going to see other dear friends in the country. I dunno; but such is the conduct of Trixie. For weeks she has been away, and only this morning she put her head into my sitting-room with an aggrieved air, and with all the assurance of perpetual constancy said "Oh, are you busy? You must first trim me a hat and then let me put it on, and after that take me to the Park." Why did Providence enrich me with so many talents, I wonder. I am an adept at the art of millinery, or at least I have managed to persuade my friends that I possess this talent. They also think it is allied to the virtue of amiability, and Trixie flung on to my table, upon which I had already placed with signal care and precision the special pictures which are to illustrate my diary to-day, three yards of tulle, a box of pins, two feathers, a bunch of flowers, and a battered hat shape. I rescued those pictures

before I justified her opinion of my good nature, and gazed affectionately at the details of a dress described by my artist as mauve cloth embroidered with jet and trimmed with lace, with lace epaulettes over the tight sleeves, and then I smiled approval upon an evening gown of pale blue chiffon mounted over pale green chiffon, traced with iridescent sequins of green and blue, with the low bodice showing a berthe outlined with a kilted frill and fastened at one side with a bunch of lilies of the valley and blue forget-me-nots. This is a very pretty dress, and I gently murmured of its virtues while I collected the materials of Trixie's fancy and proceeded to pin them together into the latest model of millinery. The recipe for such concoction might read as follows: Take any battered old shape, turn the brim up in the front, place flat against it a little to one side a large and much-ruffled rosette of tulle, in the centre of which pin a diamond ornament; from this rosette covering the brim place either sprays of flowers or small ostrich feathers, and persuade a scarf of tulle to cover the base of the crown round the back; the result may serve as a dainty of fashion. Trixie was delighted when she put it on, though she expostulated severely as one pin after another stuck itself obtrusively into her head. Neat sewing is not included amongst my hat-trimming virtues.

And then we went to sit in the Park under the trees, and looked at the people, and found fashion a very delightful thing, specially admiring a cream dress decked with insertions of lace flowers, worn with a hat of mauve and blue flowers turned up in the front, with a huge velvet ribbon bow of many loops and two ends. This bow was evidently wired, for it set up in quaint curves called by the uninitiated Louis XVI., and I was yearning all the time to touch it and comprehend its mysteries. On Trixie's next new hat I shall try to achieve its prototype.

WEDNESDAY: I have been spending the whole day in the country with Essie. I have counted her pigs, I have listened to her cocks crowing, I have smiled fondly on the young turkeys, thinking how nice they will be at Christmas, I have revelled in the glorious show of rhododendrons, and have altogether envied her her rural peace. She looked charming to-day in a frock of grey homespun, with a shirt made of the finest tucks of mauve batiste alternating with stripes of very fine ivory lace. This was in the old-fashioned Garibaldi style, pouching in the front, with shirt sleeves, and fastening down the back. Round her waist she had a belt of grey leather, and on her head a small toque of mauve straw, with three grey wings slanting at one side from a knot of mauve tulle which encircled the crown. She insisted that I should play croquet with her, according to the new rules—an infinitely fatiguing occupation. I stood over an hour, and never achieved a single stroke of the least value. The enthusiast who invented the new croquet evidently determined that the hoops should be an inch too small for the balls to pass through, and the distances so great that they cannot be



MAUVE AND BLUE CHIFFON, TRIMMED WITH SEQUINS.



DRESS OF MAUVE CLOTH, EMBROIDERED JET AND TRIMMED LACE.

measured without the aid of a telescope. I shall take my race glasses next time I go to play croquet with Essie, I am not long-sighted enough for the task. (Note.—You must be very long-sighted to beat Essie at anything.) She gave me a beautiful tea of strawberries and cream and hot cakes, and I came back to town just in time to dress for dinner and go to see "My Innocent Boy," a capital play which amused me immensely. Leonard Merrick's books have always amused me too. He wrote one called "Cynthia," which was delightful to me, so full of human nature and so witty. And George R. Sims, his collaborator in this play, like good wine needs no bush—mustard and cress is more in his line.

SATURDAY: I am much too tired to write to-night. I have been doing my duty by the London season. What a hateful thing is duty. I have visited two concerts, I have been out to dinner, and I have attended an evening reception. Is this pleasure? Not to me. Yet I have worn five dresses during the twenty-four hours, and the heart of woman which could cry out against the pleasures of such possibility is surely stony. (On reflection I believe stony is a slang term applied to those who are impecunious.) Yet I should think the practice of wearing five dresses in one day might lead that way ultimately.

I think my light grey crêpe de chine ideal for the moment. It is made in polonaise style, dragged across the chest, and tight at the waist, and it is edged with silken fringe. A small chemisette of spotted net tied with a little pale blue silk ribbon at the neck completes it becomingly, and the hat of black chip lined with white chip with a black feather at one side, and some white tulle with black velvet spots upon it at the other, puts the finishing touch to a costume which does full justice to its author and its wearer.

My evening dress cost me a great deal of money, and it does not happen to suit my peculiar want of charm. It is of black Chantilly lace mounted on white lisse, with a white lisse sash and a few white folds inside the décolletage. I shall dispose of it at increased rates to Nellie. Nellie as the purchaser of my discarded clothes appears to me in a new and most fascinating light.